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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

MENTAL LIFE AND CULTURE:

ESSAYS AND SKETCHES,

EDUCATIONAL AND LITERARY.

BY

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PREFACE.

To edit an incomplete literary production of a deceased author must on all occasions prove a delicate if not an embarrassing task, and especially so when this function falls to the lot of an admiring and affectionate brother. Nor does a long life of the closest intellectual companionship between the author and the editor render the labor in any degree easier.

The work of gathering together the material for publication was only begun by the author just prior to the fatal illness. It has devolved upon me to make selections from the miscellaneous manuscript at hand to complete the volume. The material is in the form of essays and sketches, which may be classified as educational, psychological, moral, critical, and literary. Some are brief, and perhaps are merely suggestive, but I believe that thoughts so expressed on such topics are none the less valuable or interesting on that account. They were written at different periods, some of them many years ago, as the dates show, but, as these give utterance to thoughts and opinions similar to

those more recently penned, they are of like interest. Some of them were doubtless never intended for publication, at least not in this form. In all there is an ever-present, strong, deep-flowing sentiment, pleading for the better care of the mental faculties, especially for the moral sense in its many and practical relations to the well-being of the individual himself. Those on educational problems constitute a connected series, while the others might be classed under different headings, but they all concern the higher mental life, viewed chiefly from the subjective stand-point.

The main desire of the author was ever to endeavor to help men and women to a better life through the medium of their moral sense. It was firmly held as a principle that they must learn to know themselves, to recognize their weakness as well as their strength, and to obtain the mastery over themselves; that they should be taught to unfold and cultivate their individual lives, thus bringing out the character with which Nature had endowed them. It was further maintained that the moral nature, in all its goodness and all its perversity, is the part of man best worth analyzing and considering; and that the development naturally following a better acquaint-

ance with this sense tends to make men and women not only wiser, but nobler, more contented, and happier. Thus they must be shown and made to comprehend the causes of their shortcomings, failures, and mistakes, before they may hope to overcome them. These and kindred ideas are illustrated in various themes, not only in this book, but also throughout the previous volumes.

While the matter contained between the covers must speak for itself, it may not be out of place to volunteer the information that the thoughts expressed emanate from an earnest, womanly, and loving soul; from a mature and philosophic mind; from one thoroughly honest in her convictions, whose whole thought was applied to the study of those problems which bear on the moral qualities residing in human beings. In corroboration of this statement, the lessons and truths permeating the essays constituting "Philosophers and Fools" and "Gentlefolks and Others," both published some years ago, may be incidentally referred to.

A natural born student of the mind and of people rather than of objective surroundings; educated liberally at home and abroad; a comprehensive reader; proficient in many lan-

guages; a traveller, familiar with the people and the best thought of all civilized countries,—the author was eminently qualified to discuss those questions to which she was attracted. The life was devoted to studying, analyzing, and portraying the many and varied subtle and complex workings of the mind, particularly as they possessed a direct and practical bearing, for good or for bad, upon the character. The standard of conscience was elevated, and her life was marked in the highest degree by rectitude and purity in thought and action. These attributes gave her at all times the courage and strength to speak fearlessly, and to contend for the principles she adhered to as being of paramount importance for the welfare of every one.

L. A. D.

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ON TEACHING.

"The Application of the Principles of Psychology to the Work of Teaching" is the title given to a proposed prize essay. Is there not rather too much title here? The one word "teaching" expresses the subject clearly enough. And why psychology, when mind, soul, or spirit is quite as good and so much more familiar? To you, a student of the mind, nomenclature is of slight importance. A score of words from as many different languages tell you one and the same fact. You listen, make your own deductions, classify at your convenience. But to the popular ear—the one most important to reach—the case is different. The names of sciences ought to be put into the simplest possible form.

Why, for example, should there be this senseless distinction made between mind and soul,—the latter relegated to Sunday, the former to week-days? Why this, when the two words mean precisely the same thing? Let us concede that simplicity in lan-

guage, as in other matters, is the essence of good sense.

Principles of psychology, while looking grander, really means no more than laws of mind, or laws of soul. The psychologist is simply one whose mind has the faculty of reading human character. Man to him is what fossils are to the paleontologist, what the firmament is to the astronomer, what art is to the artist.

Mind being in one sense man himself, the psychologist esteems that fact the most momentous. Principles of psychology, then, stands for the same idea as laws of human nature. You will agree with me that to read those laws is easy enough, and that the hard thing to do is to apply such reading to the coarse work of every-day life.

Teaching shares in this general limitation. You, the teacher, may know exactly what a pupil needs—what scores of pupils need—yet be wholly unable, through circumstances, to put that knowing into practice. A school, like any other organization, requires many kinds of people for its support. In the many are various grades of ideas, all of them, naturally, regarded by their owners as sacred rights. To simplify this recognized difficulty, the organizers of schools ought to be chosen from among the best students of human nature in the community.

Teaching, as a principle, is limitless. It precedes birth, inasmuch as qualities of parents or ancestors are transmitted to children. It never ends with death, inasmuch as the influence of the teacher extends far beyond visible life.

In childhood life is chiefly instinctive. There is no reasoning, no conviction, no clashing of mind and heart. Vagueness is our atmosphere. We speak or do not speak, feel or do not feel, through causes which, albeit very real, are to ourselves unknown. Later, in recalling what might have been done to help our childish groping, we are thrilled with alternate pain and joy,—pain for the good we missed, joy for the help we possibly may give the childhood of other mortals.

Children have a marked instinctive personality. To act upon that is to help them in the most efficient way. The earliest, therefore most important, teaching of children is, unfortunately, not in the hands of the few who think, but of the many who are thoughtless. Parents, to begin with, servants, secondly, have the sole care of children during the most teachable years. What these two factors do badly—far worse than omitting entirely—teachers discover to their cost.

But teaching, like all other matters, is subject to general society laws. The kind you and I and our

neighbors get depends upon the accident of birth, of circumstances. The few wealthy people may choose for their children any grade of school or any kind of private teacher. The majority of people, however, must accept whatever school the community provides.

THE GREAT IMPORTANCE OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Public schools are of chief importance as to—

1. Their organization.
2. Classification of pupils according to intellect.
3. Relations of teacher and pupil.
4. Mode of examinations.

Nobody, strictly speaking, can be thoroughly educated. Teaching, at best, is but an amelioration of ignorance. Recognizing this truth, schools should be so organized as to give the utmost possible help to children.

First of all, let there be different education for boys and girls. Studies, teachers, methods of reward, of punishment—let all be strictly applicable to sex. Boys are to be strengthened, hardened, trained to be future world-combatants. The public in a thousand various phases is to be their arena, and careful preparation is imperative for even an average vantage-ground there. For girls quite another sort of life is in store; wifehood, mother-

hood, home,—these are the words that express woman's happiest destiny.

Whoever doubts this may go to the life-records of women who have carefully sounded the depths of feminine human nature, women highly organized, whose clear thinking is balanced by ardent feeling. The testimony, whether written or lived, of such women gives the world its best guidance in this question.

"L'âme n'a point de sexe, mais le corps en a un; et l'une ne doit pas empiéter sur les droits de l'autre." *

The public school has in it all the elements of society at large. Boys show their manly prerogatives of strength, boldness, ambition, combativeness; girls show their womanly ones of weakness, timidity, romantic tendencies, love of peace. For the great middle class this school gives the only teaching it ever gets: hence the importance that it shall combine the chief elements of training for future men and women.

Schools here are more difficult to manage than in other countries because of our mixed nationality. This produces singularly complex character. Edu-

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* "The soul has no sex, but the body has; the one should not encroach upon the rights of the other."—MIRABEAU.

cation cannot eradicate inherited tendencies. In one child we see combined the cool head of North Germany and the warm sensibilities of Southern France or Italy,—an inheritance of temperament which means at once wealth and the cares that wealth inevitably brings. In another we see predominant the phlegm of the Hollander, in another the careless impulsiveness of the Irish, in still others the self-complacency of the English, the shrewdness of the Scotch, the sturdy thrift of the Swiss.

American children show all the best and all the worst results of mixed nationality. If they are brighter than European children, they are, too, less docile, less respectful, less teachable. There is too much liberty in the atmosphere. Children, like people, are the better for judicious restraint. "It is happy for us," says De Mandeville, "to have fear for a keeper as long as our reason is not strong enough to govern our appetites." Children, very naturally, have appetites chiefly. American children have a native-born contempt for a keeper. Left for the most part to wander at will, they often browse upon unwholesome knowledge. The clever ones develop usually into that shocking species called "precocious," in whom knowing much is synonymous with knowing evil.

It is this want of a keeper in the home that causes the chief difficulty in the school. Not, of course, that open rebellion can take place; but mental resistance to teaching is too common to be even noticed. The child's mind must have respect for a teacher before it can believe in and accept his teaching. This respect does not come with the act of going to school. It is a quality of the mind, one akin to honesty and truthfulness, a moral part of the child that must be guarded in the very earliest years of home-life.

With the majority this respect is lacking. To supply this lack the organizers of schools should give the deepest attention to the primary classes. It is these that give the first impetus both to mind and to morals. There is no social duty higher than this. School is greater in power than the church by right of frequency, by the law of repetition. Five days' teaching in proportion to one day's gives naturally greater results.

The primary school is entitled to the best-trained, the most experienced teachers,—men and women capable of reading human character. With this gift there could be no conflict between teacher and pupil, no forcing of knowledge down unwilling throats.

The noblest result of your teaching is a positive

interest in learning. This suggests the usual routine of non-psychological schools. Children are made to study a certain book before their curiosity in the subject is awakened. Under this régime even the most conscientious among them get but little for their pains. Knowing the lesson means a valiant struggle with words, a glib repeating of them to the teacher, while of actual understanding there is naught. To give children the principles of spelling or of reading is to give the substance that enables the mind to grow.

With the primary school lies the chief responsibility. To give unwise training here is to commit the child to years of school drudgery with only bad results. Finally, when his education is said to be finished, in what condition is his mind? Twisted, distorted, injured, it is for all thinking purposes wholly useless. Instead of wishing to advance, it joyfully breaks the long-felt, irksome bonds and plunges into physical delights that are always at hand to tempt the escaped prisoner. The primary school has the heaviest responsibility. Whatever is neglected there becomes so much the harder to teach in succeeding departments. Psychology gives a long list of good things that the primary school might but does not teach.

1. The art of attention,—listening with earnestness, with respect, with concentration of thought.

2. The art of observation,—of speech, of persons, of facts, of those things printed in school-books.

3. The art of accuracy,—training children to speak distinctly, concisely, neatly, and to recite in the same manner.

MORAL INFLUENCE IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM A POTENT FACTOR.

CHILDREN show the same mixture of good and bad as is found in the same number of adults. There is, however, this wide difference: in one case eradication of bad is not to be expected; in the other, it is largely within the power of schools. Taking the worst cases,—the children in whom nature has put but a modicum of brain and a barely perceptible moral sense,—it is found that training produces a marked improvement. Happily, these worst cases are rarely found in public schools. In general a hundred children taken from the ranks are found to be fairly enough endowed to be susceptible to good teaching.

As to what shall be called good, psychology answers without hesitation. First in importance should be moral philosophy. Children can just as readily be impressed with the morale of school as soldiers are with the morale of the army.

1st. A sense of the privileges of going to school.

2d. Respect for teachers.

3d. Personal responsibility.

4th. Punishment for self-indulgence, whatever its form.

Children are embryo citizens. What they will most need in society the school ought to aim at giving them. But, it may be argued, children are like their elders; even when convinced of what is wholesome, they often perversely choose the other kind.

Very true. But for these cases society provides restraint and punishment. The school must do the same. Its moral tone cannot be too high. And of moral lessons the most efficacious is to make the child pay the cost of his sloth, of his neglect, of his passion. This paying is the basis of that all-potent factor, self-control. The having or not having this factor explains the two extremes in society called success and failure.

To devise punishments for children calls for the most thorough knowledge of human nature. That they should act mainly upon the moral susceptibility is granted. Where this moral force is deficient, then, of course, other methods must be applied. The senses are to be appealed to, acted upon. Privations of appetite, of sports, of intercourse with companions, of anything that is a special pleasure to the individual child, should be the punishment.

Punishment, whatever its kind, can be impressed upon the mind as a means of gaining self-control. A pupil of good mind, for instance, may be habitually careless in preparation. To find out the reason and to insist upon its abolishment is effectually to help an intellect that otherwise might come to do more harm than good to the world. Taking children as they are, it is evident that there is an abundance of material that has grown mischievous through absolute neglect or bad culture.

Moral philosophy can be taught to young children in two ways. The first, a practical one, is through the prudent restraint that makes infractions of law, if not impossible, at least difficult. The second is through punishment. Neglect, carelessness, disobedience, disrespect in speech or manner, infringement of rules, each brings its just consequences. To help the child to know himself is the best knowledge school can give. To reach the moral sense through the mind requires infinite tact. There should be nothing forced, nothing made puzzling, embarrassing, painful.

Ill-timed reproof makes a deep wound without the least benefit to character. A well-endowed child is something exquisitely tender, sensitive to countless subtle influences from voice, manner, speech. Yet he is no more liable to take shadow

for substance than is an adult. He judges his elders by instinct, through the subtlety called presence. He is quick to discern irritation, discouragement, or disgust in his superior. He feels dimly what later as man he sees clearly,—viz., that knowledge is fathomless. One science leads to another, one tract of thought to other and still broader tracts, until at last comes the conviction that ignorance of most things is inevitable.

Character, on the contrary, has depths, can be sounded. It is something real, tangible, a fact that harmonizes with the lowest no less than with the highest conditions of life. If the young child have had practical moral training, he will later have no difficulty in studying moral philosophy in a book. Every one knows how easy it is to learn a thing already understood as a principle.

School is the great antidote to the disastrous influences of an ignorant home. Not that there is lack of affection in parents, for, as Octave Feuillet pithily writes, "Il n'est pas très difficile, en effet, d'aimer ses enfants; il suffit de n'être pas un monstre."* It is not natural affections that are wanting, it is mental light. Training in its sim-

* "It is not a hard thing to love your own children; not to do so you would be a monster."

plest, therefore its best, sense means developing such powers as nature has given. That the mind shall do good service, the moral sense must first be acted upon. This law applies to the child the same as to the adult.

NUMBER AND KIND OF STUDIES.

Next to moral influence the most weighty question to decide is the number and kind of studies. Under actual conditions too much is attempted. Sydney Smith used to accuse himself of having consumed "cart-loads" of superfluous food; to-day children may be pitied for having cart-loads of knowledge emptied upon their heads. The student of mature years must constantly guard himself against mental excesses. Attracted by all kinds of knowledge, one branch leading to another and another, his danger is in yielding to these seductive forms. Many a mind is absolutely lost to the world through sheer dissipation of its native forces. Too much of anything is the abuse that destroys. In learning the law is as infallible as in physics.

A mind is crowded with facts, with theories. Endless vagaries springing out of such knowledge produce hopeless confusion. Such a mind is a mental rubbish-room. Everything is there, but nothing at hand when wanted.

In schools the crying difficulty is—too much.

The knowledge given is far beyond digestion. The poor little victims are mercilessly crammed. As to what kind of studies, and how many, shall be given to children, psychology speaks very plainly. The studies are to be adapted to the mind, not the mind to the studies.

What Heine wittily says of Latin and Greek is suggestive as to other studies: "Was aber das Lateinische betrifft so haben Sie gar keine Idee davon, Madame, wie das verwickelt ist. Den Römern würde gewiss nicht Zeit genug übrig geblieben sein die Welt zu erobern, wenn sie das Latein erst hätten lernen sollen. Vom Griechischen will ich gar nicht sprechen; ich ärgere mich sonst zu viel. Die Mönche im Mittelalter hatten sonst ganz Unrecht nicht, wenn sie behaupteten dass das Griechische eine Erfindung des Teufels sei. Gott kennt die Leiden die ich dabei ausgestanden."

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* "As to Latin, madam, you have no idea what a complicated thing it is. Had the Romans themselves been obliged to learn it, I am certain they would have had no time left for conquering the world. As for Greek, I will not so much as speak of it; it would make me too angry. The monks of the Middle Ages were not so far wrong when they asserted that Greek was a discovery of the devil himself. God only knows what tribulations it has caused me."—*Reisebilder*, vol. i.

Southey gives similar testimony. In a letter to John Rickman in 1807 he wrote, "Nothing can be so little calculated to advance our stock of knowledge as our inveterate mode of education, whereby we all spend so many years in learning so little. I was from the age of six to that of twenty learning Greek and Latin, or, to speak more truly, nothing else. The little Greek I had sleepeth, if it be not dead, and can hardly wake without a miracle, and my Latin, though abundant enough for all useful purposes, would be held in great contempt by those people who regard the classics as the scriptures of taste."

The mind absorbs knowledge in proportion to appetite. That children are not hungry for school-books is not their fault. That they have a keen relish of story-books and warm admiration for the story-teller proves very clearly the modes in which instruction might often be given.

Oral teaching is the most effectual means of reaching young minds. Yet, as every one knows, Latin, Greek, and other languages are quickly acquired by the mind that thirsts for them. To learn languages there must be an ear for them, just as there must be for music. Without that ear the study of languages is drudgery, unproductive of the slightest good result.

HOW SHALL CHILDREN BE INSTRUCTED?

After the number and kind of studies comes the problem, How shall these be taught? Here are school-books, here are teachers, here are pupils: how shall they be made to assimilate? 1st. To make oral teaching the chief method in primary classes is to solve the worst part of the difficulty. 2d. Recitations should give way to the pupil's explanation in his own language of the pages studied. A good speaker at once arrests the attention, awakens interest, persuades the mind to follow the subject. The chapter of history that in the book seemed but a tedious repetition of names and dates, a dreary narration of wars, conquests, and wars over again, becomes under oral teaching as fascinating as a story. People of far-off foreign lands are thus portrayed so vividly that children learn to think and talk about them as realities.

If a child can talk he can very soon be taught to write. The much-dreaded "composition" can be made as easy for some children as drawing or music is for others. Children are like grown

people. They like to do the things they can do well. Natural bent, of course, decides what can be done with ease. The aim of schools should be to help most effectually those to whom nature has been most niggardly.

A child of good mind has many thoughts that seek expression. Yet, unless taught how to find this in simple natural writing, the good mind goes to waste. It is a room full of things of varied use and beauty, of which the key is missing. Composition is the key of the mind. Children are not lacking in ideas. Every day brings to them certain observations or experiences which should give the motive of their composition. If the subject is to be a mental one, let it be spelling, reading, geography,—anything, in short, they are familiar with. If the subject is to be a social one, let it be what they see at home, in church, in school, or on the street. To describe a house and its inmates may seem trivial enough. But good and bad style can just as readily be made apparent thus as in any of the preposterous subjects so often given to children to write about.

As proof of the unnatural, illogical mode of teaching composition, we need only look at the letter-writing capacity of average school-children. With ability to talk fluently, even sensibly enough,

they yet cannot put a tithe of that talk into civilized writing. This results by no means from natural stupidity, but altogether from defective training. The subject given is usually one on which the children have no knowledge, and hence no thoughts. To be obliged to write on an unknown topic results in either absolute stupidity or servile copying,—juvenile plagiarism. But composition orally taught would be at once easy and agreeable. What is true of composition is true of every other study. Words are allowed to stand for ideas, memorizing for reflection, recitation for explanation. Getting through the book is erroneously assumed to be knowing its contents.

Oral teaching is worth more than a whole library of school-books. Put into practice with tact, with eloquence, it is the best of all training influences. The human voice, moved by brain and heart combined, is irresistible. It is this persuading or convincing of the child's mind that brings about a love of study for its own sake.

To pull down is easier than to build up,—such is the common reproach thrown at the idealist; and in it are grains of truth. There are, however, two kinds of idealists,—the visionary and the practical. The psychologist is of the latter sort. As a reader of human nature he sees the

defective side of even his own theories, his own deepest convictions. Applying this to schools, then, he pulls down nothing without pledging something better in its place. All his theories can be translated into practice. For instance, in the present system of teaching he sees too many books, too many recitations, too much frothy repetition of words instead of solid understanding of subjects. He sees that children acquire a vast amount of smattering, but no love of learning for its own sake. Graduating, taking their respective places in society, they become what schools have made them,—people at once superficial, pretentious, frivolous, people clothed in the worst kind of ignorance, that which cannot see itself.

The practical remedy for this ignorance is better teaching. Beginning in the primary department, teachers should be required to explain orally the lesson of the hour, while pupils should be required to give in their own words the facts of the lesson studied. This plan, if consistently pursued, would give the student his first need,—ability to put into clear language the fact learned, or the thought suggested by that fact.

Recitations, as at present conducted, ought to be abolished. Children would soon learn the agreeable truth that it is not knowledge that is dis-

tasteful, but the tedious repetition of vague words on a topic they do not in the least understand. Docile children are for the most part martyrs to a cruel system of teaching. The other kind, whose animal spirits are proof against any sort of coercion, are commonly in a state of mental revolt. School is to them a state of hateful bondage, to which they submit only so far as self-interest makes it expedient.

CLASSIFICATION OF PUPILS ACCORDING TO INTELLECT.

How many children out of any one hundred have good minds and a healthy moral nature? So somebody asks, with a covert sneer at higher education. I do not know how many, nor do I care to know, nor is it of the least importance to anybody save a statistician, who finds his happiness in answers to how many, how much. No, looking at teaching, it is not of the least importance to know how many bright children, how many dull ones, there are.

Responsibilities—for the conscientious—are many and heavy on this bewildering planet of ours, but, happily, they have a limit. With schools and teachers there rests not the slightest responsibility as to the mental endowments of children. The sole problem is to educate, to train, and to develop such faculties as nature may have given. Children, whatever their years, however big or little their mental inheritance, are to be treated intelligently, honestly. Above all, they are entitled to the strictest courtesy, this being not in the least incompatible with all

needful urging, persuasion, restraint. To be able to give this treatment, classification according to intellect is an absolute necessity. Many children are very dull at their books. Nobody disputes it, nor, indeed, would it be worth disputing. To find fault with children for being dull would be as cruel as to criticise their lack of personal beauty or their pedigree. Whether pupils be bright or dull is of not the slightest importance so long as they are not put into the same class. My personal sympathies are with the dull ones. The others are well able to take care of themselves.

Clever children are clever largely through temperament. It is not so much the result of greater brain-power as of a facility in using what they have. They are the practical little people in the school-world. Given so many pages of so many books, they learn quickly and recite with the coolness that comes of self-confidence,—for, rest assured, bright children have always plenty of this. They are endowed with what a phrenologist would call self-esteem, full, and consequently are not disconcerted through fear of ridicule or criticism, which in others is often the sole cause of failure. Brightness of mind does not necessarily include depth. In school it puts the child at the head of his class, gives him an air of superiority, makes him

quite an important personage. It is the same quality that in society makes the brilliant person, one who without much depth yet always appears to advantage. Ready-witted, fluent of tongue, quick to see opportunities, prompt to use them, such persons reap all the benefits of self-assertion.

Dull children are of two kinds: first, those who are self-distrustful, therefore timid, reserved, appearing to disadvantage before others; second, those who are dull because of inferior minds. In classifying, these two kinds ought to be carefully separated. The first are dull owing to temperament. They are slow in committing to memory because more interested in the ideas than in the words. Being interested, their thoughts wander. They are unpractical in study hour just as in other hours. In recitations there is the same difficulty. Knowing their own slowness, they are easily discomposed, thrown off their balance. The lesson faithfully prepared is badly recited, may appear not to have been studied at all. A harsh tone in the teacher's voice, glances from inquisitive eyes, smiles from sarcastic lips, may frighten away from the memory every vestige of the printed page.

To be slow at school by no means implies lack in brain, but to appear so is as unfortunate in school as in society. To be seemingly slow, even though

possessed of quick sensibilities, often brings forth ridicule or contempt from companions or teacher. This causes a perverted state of the mind, ending in dislike of study, shrinking from teachers, associations of mental worry and shame with school-life.

By putting into one class minds of similar calibre, much of this danger is averted. The scholar, instead of being hampered by a sense of inferiority, is emboldened to put forth his strength, is made happy by even partial success. The teacher, instead of being harassed by the mixture of quick and slow, can devote himself to the needs of the hour. Knowing the degree of ability in the class, he can confine his teaching strictly to that limit. Dulness in one branch does not mean inferiority as a whole; but it does mean emphatically that the mind should have special help in that one branch, help given with unflagging patience, with infinite tact. Classifying minds is the sole method of bringing about something special, selected, personal. "Then only," says Bacon, "will men begin to know their strength, when, instead of great numbers doing all the same things, one shall take charge of one thing and another of another."

In classes of mixed minds, education is ground down into a system, great labor being followed not only by proportionate exhaustion, but by very small

intellectual results. If conviction on this point be needed, we have but to look at masses of so-called educated people all about us. How many of these show anything harmonious, natural? How many have a true understanding of their own mental capacities? The system of classes usually in vogue is more hurtful than helpful. It is a complicated scheme, productive of weariness, exhaustion, or distaste for learning. Teacher and scholar tend to become antagonistic; consequently, where there ought to be assimilation there is conflict, where there should be confidence there is distrust, in place of energy and pleasure there is either mental chafing or prostration.

Let the adult student recall his condition of mind when forced to devote himself for days or months to some distasteful mental occupation. Did he under such conditions think learning a boon? Would it have helped the matter to be assured by somebody holding over him a rod of reproof that this irksome task would some day be of benefit? That which would chafe and try to its utmost limits the forbearance of an adult scholar, we inflict upon a child, and then wonder at its perverseness. Marvellous obtuseness! So directly opposed is this to nature's mode of action that we ought to be surprised at the comparatively small number of

idle, mischievous, rebellious school-children in the ranks.

If sick in body, children are exempted from study. But whether the mind be sick or disturbed few teachers take the trouble to inquire. If the inquiry be made, the ailment is usually treated as arising from sheer perversity. Teaching to be really helpful ought to consider the entire child-nature, not merely one part of it. In noticing the thrift and energy shown to keep children well clad, well drilled in all the little arts that conduce to good outward appearance, I am not in the least surprised that mental affairs come to occupy a secondary place in their estimate of the world.

The closer the study of parents and guardians, the better can children be understood. The desire to know exists in every child's nature. The beneficent idea of teaching is to gratify that mental desire. In those cases where all reasonable and moral ways have been tried and found useless, it were surely better to abandon than to persecute. Nature probably has some other design for children who persistently refuse to accept book-learning.

RELATIONS OF TEACHER AND PUPIL.

To say of another person, He understands me, is to express the best of life's many good things,—friendship. Children know this instinctively long before they can put it into words. Even in cold reserved natures, the kind that develop into eccentricity, there is always a strong desire to be understood. In school this desire is the foundation of genuine progress. If the teacher can but bring about this understanding between himself and his pupils his success is assured. Unfortunately, teaching shares the common fate of professions in having many clumsy workers, men and women not called but driven into the ranks. To procure teachers well qualified, every State ought to have a psychological college. Here the chief study would be human nature.

Children of quick sensibilities are usually timid, self-conscious. School to them is but too often synonymous with severity, with discouragement, with humiliation. Conscientious preparation is apt —possibly from sheer fright—to end in failure,

which brings down harsh reproaches, sarcastic rebuke. Such children need the moral help that will enable them to overcome fear of others, the ridicule of fellow-pupils, the covert criticism of certain teachers. Self-respect can be taught by pointing out means of strength. Timid children, for instance, are afraid of themselves. They shrink instinctively from saying openly what they think, from doing what the heart prompts. Allowed to grow unchecked, this becomes a morbid self-consciousness that destroys personal force.

Fear of giving offence, fear of appearing to disadvantage, fear of yielding to noble impulses, fear multiform and incessant, haunts the mind. Self-surveillance of this sort, while arising from perfectly natural sources, is irksome, harassing, crippling.

To show such a child that in its seeming weakness lies its actual strength, is to teach the best of mental principles. Timidity comes mainly from imagination, but the same faculty that in childhood causes fear, in maturity yields the power to penetrate, analyze, discover. Psychology holds that in regarding the teacher's fitness character should balance with mental attainments. Every one knows the sensation of receiving information from disagreeable people. Slovenly speech, supercilious looks, discourteous manner, irascible temper, are

elements often so mingled with the information as to make it worthless.

Now, school-children are daily receiving information upon various subjects. Whether this is to be a tedious repetition of technical language or an interesting account of things depends upon the informant's manner. Psychology says, whatever else is lacking in the teacher, see to it that he is tactful, sympathetic. Affection, interest, zeal, attainments, —these are good only when governed by courtesy. This demands that neither word nor look shall express impatience with a child's blunders, surprise at his ignorance, contempt for his failures. The teacher's entire personality should say simply, I wish to help you. The child's feelings are worth more than anything he can be taught. Here it is that the most conscientious teacher is apt to fail. His earnestness often clashes with his pupil's capacity. Ambition in the instructor is good only when controlled by courtesy. Harsh criticism often kills the struggling thought; covert ridicule may engender positive hatred.

To be competent for his post a teacher should be well grounded in psychology. He must have in himself what he aims at teaching. Unless personal character supports his assertions, in vain will be his talk of the pleasures of intellect, of the beauty of

goodness. He who is sluggish, shallow, self-indulgent, can never awaken activity or enthusiasm in another. The difference of rank, too, should be held steadily in view, consistently acted on. Comradeship between superior and inferior at once destroys authority. This fact needs especial enforcement in American schools. A wise teacher will never descend to comradeship with his pupils. This principle might cost him popularity or affection, but would preserve the more important desideratum,—authority.

Children in school, as at home, are often subjected to martyrdom. Only highly-organized people bear in mind the susceptibilities of the young. To disregard these—as shallow, thoughtless people are all the time doing—is to bring about the painful conflicts which disgrace the family circle. Children have precisely the same instinctive attractions, the same antipathies, the same variations of mood, as their elders. The teacher in school has the advantage over the parent at home in the fact of less familiarity. Cases of insubordination, if impartially analyzed, would nine times out of ten result in conviction of error on the part of the teacher.

Through ignorant handling a child's moral nature becomes morbid. Duty, that vague yet mighty word so often flung at the wayward child, is not

always the beneficent peace-bringer moralists love to portray. On the contrary, its exactions often tax cruelly the moral energies of the experienced adult. It would, then, be strange indeed if children should be found at all hours disposed to yield cheerfully their private wishes in favor of a task assigned. The more susceptible the mind, the greater the tendency to moods. In such cases extreme caution should be practised before exacting method, promptness, unquestioning obedience. That a child's manner should at times indicate coldness or indifference by no means implies want of natural affection. It may be simply because his soul rebels against a code or a fashion. The teacher of discretion will respect these variable currents of the inner life. Under no provocation whatsoever will he handle rudely what is finer than any instrument ever fabricated in the material world.

Physical life and soul-life, although beginning and ending at the same instant, are never impartially treated. The latter is the proverbial step-child. What Wieland remarks of the Abderites is singularly applicable to millions of their blood-relations about us: "The good people had never once dreamed that the soul could have any other kind of interest than the stomach, the liver, and all the rest of man's physical organization."

The bond between teacher and pupil often grows to be one so firm that it outlives every other, and for this good reason: all children are eager to learn whatever best corresponds to their natural abilities. Whoever, then, discovers these abilities and ministers to them becomes mentally related to the child, —the learner. Mental kinship is the closest of human ties.

The teacher, too, is entitled to every consideration. Like all the world's workers, he has his full share of struggle, harassment, exhaustion. Life is hard, hardest for highly-organized people who have their own complex selves to deal with in addition to the outer world. A teacher shares this universal hardness. He knows more than he can give, sees more than his hands can reach. Of all the rebuffs, vexations, and shocks he must endure, the most trying is incapacity in his scholar,—incapacity not merely to understand but to see any use in understanding. What is to be done with such barren soil? Psychology solves the question by bidding us not to waste logic on the illogical mind, but to point out other things it can do.

Not what you wish your pupil to be, but what nature has fitted him for, should be your guide. Private ambitions, whether in parents or in teachers, must at all times give way to nature's voice.

Cicero trying to make an orator of his son Marcus, whose inclinations were all those of the soldier, suffered the same disappointment that comes to many a modern home.

In the work of teaching, as in other sciences, honor comes in proportion to obstacles overcome. Such honor often comes, too, as the reformer's, the inventor's, the patriot's comes,—long after his life-work is finished.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS AN INJURY.

The idea of examinations is good. Parents like to know, and ought to be told, what their children have done in a given course of months. But this "what," fairly investigated, would tell a very different story from that of the usual public examination. This stimulates the young mind without strengthening it. It is the same specious principle that leads "intellectual" young women in society to cram for conversation when expecting to meet certain people noted in letters or science. One of this sort admitted recently that it took but a few hours to fill her mind with facts enough to carry on a conversation upon any subject whatsoever.

Doubtless this impromptu knowledge may pass current in society. But to the genuine scholar it would be simply one of the many forms of intellectual sham. Such a woman, young or old, is far more objectionable than the illiterate one, who when natural through honesty is never unpleasing. This accounts for the common fact that intellectual men so often marry women of inferior minds and breed-

ing. Of two extremes they prefer a natural woman to an artificial one.

A mind stimulated in order to appear brilliant on a particular occasion gains its object only by losing something of greater value, its probity. The same principle of sham that underlies social pettinesses is at work in public examinations. By this means the best that the school is capable of—to awaken love of learning for its own sake—is at one stroke nullified.

Of Americans it may be said as justly as it was once said of the ancient Romans, "You will find the greater number of men both ready in conceiving and quick in learning; since such quickness is natural to man; and as birds are born to fly, horses to run, and wild beasts to show fierceness, so to us peculiarly belong activity and sagacity of understanding; whence the origin of mind is said to be from heaven. But dull and unteachable persons are no more produced in the course of nature than are persons marked by monstrosity and deformities; such are certainly but few." *

The noble idea of good work through patient perseverance is corrupted by the desire for sudden advancement, for fame at any price. To appear

* Quintilian, Inst. Orat., Book I. c. i.

well, to outshine classmates, to pose for admiration,—all this exhibits vanity in its worst form, the intellectual one.

The true aim of education is not to outshine others, but to do fairly by one's own abilities. It is to advance day by day, swiftly if possible, steadily at all hazards, with a given task. That it be not admirable in the eye of critics is of trivial import in comparison with the approval of our own conscience. The going on with fixed intent to finish, the working in our best moods, the actual worthy finishing,—such is the conduct of the genuine student. Such, too, under teaching, can be made the conduct of school-children. Under teaching as now carried on there are many sham students, very few genuine ones.

Some children who could speak eloquently enough to one ear would be struck dumb before an audience. To judge intellect by this public display of dumbness would thus be highly unjust. The bare thought of an exhibition, of being called upon to display mental ability and self-poise before a critical audience, disturbs their equanimity. Their self-consciousness has its rise in delicate sensibilities that require the carefullest handling. Especially is this the case with girls. Therefore public examinations are for them far more injurious than for boys.

Public examinations degrade the work of teaching to the level of a show. Children are incited to rehearse for a performance that overstrains natural forces without yielding even so much as amusement. In certain characters it fosters vanity, conceit, arrogance; in certain others it results only in needless humiliation, in hurtful bitterness of spirit. In the studies for which they are specially fitted children require no incentives, only guidance. In the other kind they require the most skilful teachers, whose help must be followed on the scholar's part by patient plodding.

In education the only spur that psychology recognizes is from a mental-moral source,—desire to learn, the pushing forward to that goal with one's utmost personal strength. Examination-day under psychological teaching would become simply a summing up of character-records. Reward, whether in the shape of marks, prizes, or simply words of praise, would be given to pupils according to honest work done in their respective classes.

Cramming might be called the representative of false intellectual training, while competition stands for the moral falsity. Both are injurious beyond all power of words to portray. In schools, as in society, the tendency is to be superficial. To stand well before others, to be in such and such a class,

get certain marks, compete for this or that position, outstrip companions,—these aims, while containing germs of good, are not the positive good to be sought. What has my child done towards character-development? This is the question for parents to ask and for the school to answer.

Hume says, "The great end of all human industry is the attainment of happiness. For this were arts invented, sciences cultivated, laws ordained, and societies modelled by the most profound wisdom of patriots and legislators." Public schools are without question the most important of these "societies modelled." The training of a man decides the question of happiness or the reverse. As this training is, so are his home, his status in society, in his profession, in business, in art, in mechanics. Whatever the natural abilities, training determines their adaptation, their good or bad working.

The organization of public schools in a State ought to excite a keener interest than the election of a governor. That it does not do so proves the mental sluggishness of the masses and the crying need for truer education of the new generation. The knower of human nature alone can fathom mental dangers, discover moral safeguards. He alone combines the boldness of the reformer and

the charitable judgment of the philanthropist. This power is the one that sets all other powers in motion. Finally, the psychologist can say with Quintilian, "But it is enough for me to point to the subject; for I do not teach, but admonish those who are to teach."

A CHILD'S SENSIBILITIES.

Is it beneficial to tell a child that he has inherited his grandfather's temper or his uncle's self-conceit? Often repeated it will cause a feeling in the child of unrealness, a doubt as to his own accountability, a mischievous tendency to throw the consequences of his own passion or conceit upon said grandfather or uncle. Or, if the sensibilities be deep, it may cause a painful estrangement between the child and his natural guardians. Day by day he grows more indifferent, more taciturn, more morose. Gradually he is alienated from all that concerns home and its inmates.

Home is no home to him in its truest, highest sense. A stranger seeing him there would hardly take him for a member of the family, so unfamily-like are his ways. The child is himself unhappy; others are made unhappy by him; the causes are potent and natural. On the other hand, training can do much for such a child. Granted that the resemblance of character between child and ancestor exists, certainly it is no fault of the child's that the traits inherited are not agreeable ones.

Inheritance is much; education is more. A nephew may inherit vanity and egotism from an uncle. Everybody sees the resemblance between the two, but everybody does not know what education may have done to foster or counteract natural attributes. The uncle may have been wholly debarred from refined home influences, left to grow up amid dependants and sycophants. The nephew may have had every advantage that judicious parents and teachers could yield. Could we then in justice excuse in the nephew what we could excuse in the uncle? Lenience for defects or vices is in proportion to our knowledge of preceding causes. We can often tolerate disagreeable traits of character from a sense of kindness or pity.

The crowning benefit of training is self-guidance. Obedience perverted becomes slavishness. Can a child ever acquire self-reliance if taught to watch every thought and wink of others before acting? Training demands, first of all, a critical inquiry as to native qualities. What is there to work with? to contend with? to cultivate? to strengthen? to enlighten? to repress? What are the natural attributes of the child to be trained? How are these to be improved, elevated? How shall we prevent them from being injured, deteriorated?

The question of decision is one of vital importance.

If this is to be cultivated, the child must be taught not to consult parent, nurse, or teacher in every trifle, but to use his own judgment, good or bad. The gravest consequences of error often instil invaluable lessons. Better to suffer many a mortification in youth than to arrive at manhood without decision of character. Training in its best sense is simply showing another how to develop his own character. All men are teachers; all men are learners. How can we best reach the mind and heart of one whom chance places under our guidance? is the query which comes to almost every man and every woman.

Let us imagine a woman who has reached maturity earnestly endeavoring to help a young girl in her teens. She might speak somewhat in this form: That you love me, dear child, I well know. Upon this I build my hopes of inducing you to listen to what must sound extremely tedious to your young ears. I wish to talk to you about yourself,—your character. This one word means everything belonging to you,—your thoughts, wishes, aims, hopes, pleasures, manners, accomplishments.

Whatever you think, do, or feel, when with others or when alone, denotes character, shows what stuff you are made of. What you are at this present moment is the result of events over which you had no control. What you become hereafter depends upon yourself, your inner life and outward exertions.

This I would impress upon you strongly that you may quickly learn how to take criticism or censure. Accept these, whether coming from friend or teacher, as directed not to you, but to your faults. If told that your manner is unrefined, do not commit the fatal mistake of disliking the person who tells you. Remember, it is the manner which is rebuked, not you. Try, dear child, to make this distinction, to see the difference between scolding and criticism. Those who love you best are most anxious for your improvement, and evince their love by seeking to remove the blemishes upon your character. To direct your thoughts to the training of yourself is my aim.

You are now of an age to observe, to reason upon, to understand, to appreciate all that goes on in your immediate circle. It is of the utmost importance that you should have a clear idea of your own position in that circle. Young as you are, you have ideas, opinions, and tastes of your own. These

make your position one of responsibility. Those living with you derive either positive pleasure or positive pain from your society; those younger than yourself are influenced either for good or for evil by you.

In the family, children are companions as much as grown people; clear thinking and good-breeding are just as requisite in one as in the other. Of all the attractions of our sex nothing equals delicacy of feeling and gentleness of manner; no beauty, no learning, no accomplishment, can compensate for their absence. The most perfect women have this delicacy and gentleness by nature; others less favored must acquire it. That your manner is not refined is perceptible to all; but all do not see, as your friends do, that your difficulty arises from a quick, excitable disposition—untrained—not from native coarseness.

To know the effect your vehemence of manner produces upon others you have only to note how you yourself are affected by manner, how you instinctively shrink from rudeness, how easily you are swayed by tenderness. All are susceptible to manner, although many people unaccustomed to expressing their thoughts could, probably, hardly tell why they are alternately attracted and repulsed.

Home is the best place for the manifestation and

judgment of character, for there people are themselves. If a stranger—himself refined—were to observe you, dear A., in your home during a single day, he would know your one great defect. What he would discover in one day your intimate friends have known many days and years and been grieved by it. This one great defect is lack of respect and courtesy towards your parents. That you love them deeply I know, for beneath the blemishes which deface the exterior your heart is sound and true. But your habitual manner implies a disrespect often verging upon contempt.

That coldness and indifference sometimes actually exist between parents and children is sad enough; but that a child should love and be loved and yet treat her parents with positive disrespect is still worse. You cannot fail to see that your temper is the root of the trouble. You are not ignorant of what is due to those older than yourself. You know the difference between rudeness and courtesy, crossness and amiability, loudness and gentleness. You notice manner in others and are affected, made comfortable or uncomfortable, by it.

Have I not often heard you say to a member of your own family, How cross you are! It was easy to see how thoroughly unhappy you felt. But what

was your own state of mind, what your voice and manner, when those words left your lips? Were not you, too, cross? Were you not committing the very fault you blamed in another? Here is the secret of crossness, of discourtesy,—in your own untrained character. This it is that gives yourself and those who have you in charge trouble.

What is this thing we call temper? Let us analyze it. As long as all goes well, that is, as long as you are not thwarted in any of your wishes, at liberty to go and come, study, dress, and visit according to your own inclinations, you are amiable enough. But things often go ill instead of well, and then we have the test of temper. Perhaps before you are up one hour you are requested to do something you dislike; perhaps many times in the course of the day this occurs. Lo, what a change in your face, your manner, your voice! You are transformed from a bright, laughing girl into a scowling, angry one. You are womanly in appearance and feeling, while extremely ignorant of a woman's position.

You have been to school ten years, while, owing to lack of home training, you are strangely deficient in the first rudiments of letters. The strong points in your character are all of a practical kind, making you quick to see and comprehend every-

thing pertaining to external life. In mental attributes you are weak and childish. You have no powers of reflection, no love of study. You do what is required of you through affection for your teachers, but have no conception of the value of knowledge. You are ignorant and not ashamed of your ignorance.

ON TRAINING CHILDREN.

Young people when bodily sound and high-bred are the most charming of all human beings. Full of vitality and vigor, of elastic step, showing in every movement, in every tone of voice, enjoyment of mere existence, they carry about with them a cheery, invigorating atmosphere. This vitality is a something indescribable, yet a thing to be enjoyed even by utter strangers who pass it on the public roadside. Young people bodily sound and high-bred! Do we of to-day give enough attention to those two states? Do we indeed value them at all in proportion to other things? Fine clothes, handsome houses, fast horses, princely yachts, athletic games, and, above all, money, are by most young people infinitely better understood, therefore more valued, than bodily soundness and high-breeding.

Juvenile misanthropy is by no means uncommon; but it is satisfactory to know that the causes for it are not unnatural. What results when a sensitive child is exposed to a bad system of training? Commanded without judgment, coaxed against

conviction, scolded unjustly, indulged capriciously, he lives through childhood in a state of wretched vassalage. To crown his wretchedness, his masters reproach him with not being "bright and happy like other children." Is happiness, then, a matter of volition? It might be so implied from the unfeeling mode in which children are reproached with being cross, fretful, or obstinate. These outbursts are evident symptoms of unhappiness, protests of nature against ill treatment of body or soul.

Children may be surrounded with the tenderest care and solicitude and yet be always conscious of a strong under-current of dissatisfaction,—a state of feeling to which various names may be given, but which probably arises solely from too meagre a spiritual diet. The young soul is hungry; it absorbs much and requires much, sometimes growing almost fierce in its cravings. But the proper food is not always at hand, and there arise frequent bursts of indignation at not being understood.

Such a child is reproached with being quiet and morose, not lively like other children. Is there not good cause for that quietness and moroseness? Can a child force itself to be other than it is? Unhappily, the experiment is too often tried, the child being driven to make the attempt, as it were, in self-defence; but the result is failure. Nature

may be resisted. Through fear and timidity and dread of criticism and ridicule, the child may be induced to do and to say strange things, things foreign to its tastes and abilities. But revenge in one form or another is sure to follow.

It is not strange that many clear brains should be cynical upon the subject of education—in its modern progressive sense—when so many sights and sounds give evidence of no substantial good resulting from it. When we see an ordinary servant-girl evincing far more judgment in the management of a child than the mother herself, we may be pardoned for doubting whether a long course of the best schools is the best preparation for the duties of womanhood. To speak glibly of inefficient servants is a convenient cloak for the inefficiency of many a household queen. Mothers are the chief trainers of the human race. They have in their hands the morale of intellect, conscience, and manner. With those three intact, the special trainers who follow the mother's *régime* find their way plainly marked.

The majority of women in the well-to-do classes are "well educated," as the phrase goes. In other words, they were clothed, fed, and sent to school up to a certain age. After that come wifehood and motherhood,—the highest round of womanly ambi-

tion. To reach that round is one thing; to maintain the position with dignity is another and a far more difficult thing. In entering a family, do we ask, Where was the mother educated? What branches of science did she pursue? How much was expended upon masters? We ask nothing. We simply give ourselves up to impressions; we look, listen, feel; we come away convinced without having heard the argument.

To say what a woman should or should not learn is impertinence to nature. Music and dancing are as good for one as books and reflection for another. Training, in a generous sense, looks to development of natural traits as its end. The degree of intellect a mother possesses is of far less importance than its soundness. A few ideas of healthy growth are worth more to her than a whole catalogue of sciences and accomplishments.

Plutarch says, "It was not said amiss by Antisthenes, when people told him that one Ismenias was an excellent piper, 'It may be so,' said he, 'but he is but a wretched human being, otherwise he would not have been an excellent piper.' And King Philip to the same purpose told his son Alexander, who once at a merry-meeting played a piece of music charmingly and skilfully, 'Are you not ashamed, son, to play so well? For it is enough

for a king or prince to find leisure sometimes to hear others sing, and he does the Muses quite honor enough when he pleases to be but present while others engage in such exercises and trials of skill.' Many times when we are pleased with the work we slight and set little by the workman or artist himself." *

Upon the same principle a mother derives far greater honor from the management of her household than from her performances in music, painting, embroidery, or authorship. A woman cannot have too much culture; but a single accomplishment may consume the time and strength due to the home. A woman of culture could not be the mistress of an illiterate, unrefined home. A woman of accomplishments which would be the delight of a social circle could not readily reconcile herself to domestic confusion, discomfort, and neglect.

Accomplishments add nothing to a woman's character. Save in rare cases, they exhaust her strength and breed only vanity or discouragement. It is not uncommon to find parents expending means wholly beyond their income upon the accomplishment which the daughter never thinks of from the day of her marriage. To play, to sing, to draw, are

* Plutarch, in Pericles.

terms which excite a smile in the man of the world. For courtesy's sake he permits himself to be bored, while mentally drawing comparisons with the brilliant performances of professional artists.

Why are not school-girls more emulous in the acquirement of judgment, wit, penetration, those character-adornments which will elevate and grace their entire future? Why should girls be taught that accomplishments are in any way essential to education? If gifted with marked ability, let them labor with enthusiasm at its development. In this case it is a source of genuine delight to themselves and to the world. To cultivate talents is a term which in cultured society must oust the miserable counterfeit called acquiring accomplishments.

To mothers of middle age, of fixed ideas, of self-complacent principles, nothing can be said which would in the least change their course. They are what they are. They must be tolerated, held in check, or pitied. To suggest change is in their ears to find fault; to intimate better management of servants or children is to interfere; to hint at more agreeable topics of conversation than the details of the domestic machine is to be over-fastidious. Middle age cannot change its habits of thought and feeling. Whatever its character, it desires to continue in it.

But to young mothers, those just starting upon the most honorable of all careers, every thinker has a right to submit his theory. Youth is pliable, amenable to innovation, eager for progress, glad to adopt plans which promise honor or happiness. Young mothers cannot have the standard of womanhood too high. Whatever the special attributes of character, whatever the position in life, every young mother may say to herself: My career in life is settled. I have a home. What I make that home depends mainly upon my character. That I have a fair amount of grace and beauty I am thankful; but that these will not make the house comfortable I am hourly made aware of. That I am happy now in my husband and children is no warrant for the perpetuity of this happiness. My own ignorance is daily forced upon my notice. If before marriage there was need for intelligence, gentleness, and tact, now there is the same need tenfold augmented. Then my influence was indirect; now it is direct, positively good or bad.

If I am to reign supreme here in my domain, I must first rule myself. If my husband is to supply me with funds, he must have proof of my judicious outlay. If my servants are to be well trained, my supervision must be unrelaxing; if they are to respect me, my knowledge must be equal to daily

demands upon it. If my son is to rely upon my judgment, he must hear no silly speech, witness no frivolous conduct. If my daughter is to imitate my character, I dare not indulge in unreasonable desires or peevish remonstrances.

Patience with ignorance ranks highest among household virtues. We dare not censure either child or adult for sins springing from that source. But patience does not render us pain-proof. Can we avoid a shudder when we hear a mother narrating before daughters of tender years a horrid deed of which human folly or crime is the ground-work? Why should they be prematurely enlightened as to human depravity? The chief charm of girlhood is ingenuousness. The certain result of familiarity with the dark side of human nature is to awaken suspicion and mistrust. If, through idleness or unwise training, girls are over-curious, they can readily learn all the details of crime. But it is peculiarly inappropriate that the mother should lift the veil from the guileless soul of the daughter.

The training that makes character is a psychological process. A. at two years shows traits which cause serious discomfort to parents, nurse, and relatives. Parental joy in the possession of a vigorous boy is almost overbalanced by the marked fickle-

ness, irritability, and self-will which characterize the child. This at two years! What will it be at five, ten, fifteen years? Yet this very boy in his happy moods exercises a rare fascination over those who understand him. His defects and peculiarities are so clearly his by inheritance that he cannot be other than he is. Where affinity exists between parent and child, inexhaustible patience on the part of the former is the result.

Tolerance is an easy virtue when we sympathize with the offender. A.'s mother, who knows her child to be psychologically related to herself, feels sure that he shares her tastes, feelings, likes, and dislikes. A.'s father, who perceives in his two-year-old son traits which have not the remotest affinity to his own character, may well look forward to future years with forebodings. In such a case natural affection may exist between father and son; care on the one side, duty on the other, and community of interests, will undoubtedly promote peace; but without affinity there can never be that intellectual communion which enables us to comprehend defects or perverseness.

We may expend earnest solicitude and ardent affection upon a child, and yet if there be no natural affinity we are continually baffled in our attempts to read his mind and heart or win his

confidence. The child's strange freaks and whims, the passion, the antipathies and sympathies, all the odd ways which to the observer are so full of interest, to A.'s father seem wholly unaccountable,—nay, if the truth were told, distasteful. Impossible to manage the boy! exclaims the father when tried beyond endurance by an ebullition of passion or a fit of mulishness on the part of his young son. I cannot find out what he wants; and as for his will, no human power can change it when once a thing has been resolved upon, if it be only going into the next room or opening a particular closet. The casual visitor in the house may understand A. much better than his own father, simply because he reads him psychologically.

How late some things are learned! Possibly only in maturity, after passing through a varied discipline, does a man learn why he was so peculiar a child; why subject to moods, fancies, and humors; why averse to the common sports of his age and sex; why so shy and self-conscious. He knows now that these unchildlike traits arose from the seeds of inherited ill health,—physical or psychological,—that this was ample cause for the overclouding of years which otherwise would have been buoyant and happy.

With disease in the system, how can a child be

good-humored, gay, joyous? How little genuine sympathy there is with children, spite of all the professions made! How curious to reflect upon the utter irresponsibility of children in all that pertains to health, temperament, or tastes, and then note the absolute ignoring of this fact by their elders! How these last urge, criticise, reprimand! How they vex and irritate the tender souls that come under their influence!

All this in the name of duty! As if it were easy for children to do or not do, desire or not desire! The simple fact that children are as strongly marked with individuality as their progenitors is practically ignored. Sympathy, that faculty of understanding and feeling for another's trials, seems to be one rarely dwelt upon when the relations between parent and child are discussed. Nominally there is a vast amount of love on the parental side: virtually there is a vast amount of hurtful misapprehension and needless thwarting.

BE TRUE TO YOUR INDIVIDUALITY.*

What a blessing if a mind like Emerson's could gain access to a child of ten years and instil into it the strength that comes from such sentiments as these! "Believe your own thought, believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men. . . . A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. . . . Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility. . . . The power which resides in man is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without pre-established harmony. We but half express ourselves and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us has."

Now, a child of ten could, of course, hardly com-

* Written in 1868.

prehend such ideas. But the spirit of them, if put into language suited to his understanding, he could appreciate. What an effect would be produced upon a child of thoughtful, earnest temperament! How full of truth, of beauty, of strength, are these words! They seem to search the very soul and compel it to long for genuine life.

"Sich selbst ausleben, das ist Alles,"* says Auerbach. But how to do it? Assuredly not by talking about it. There is only one way: by realizing the sacredness of every moment, by being true to the faintest breathings of conscience. Not where we are, not what we do, but how we are, how we do, is the question that concerns us. Where we are born, what our talents, advantages, circumstances, need never give us anxiety or doubt. Whatever has been given, whatever withheld, we must recognize that some power has placed us here, has instructed us how to work.

We know always far more than we can accomplish. Because we are careless and unfaithful we look beyond our sphere; we long for other means, circumstances, gifts. Our highest good is to know wherein present duty lies. The past we cannot recall or change. Whatever it has worked of good

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* To live your individual life, this is all.

or evil remains imperishable, eternal. But to-day is yours,—with this alone you have to do, to this you are to devote the strongest, the best within you. What unspeakable happiness fills the soul when the present is devoted to high purposes,—when each moment is held in the hand as something holy, precious, inspired! How dare we trifle away these moments in unworthy occupations when we know that immense results are enfolded in one and all! An eternity of woe or bliss may lie in a single thought, suggestion, deed. Yet how carelessly we flutter on, seeking only that which is fair, pleasant, easy!

This bright, clear, life-giving flame within,—let us watch it with zealous care, strive to direct everything by its light. Nothing is trifling. Our getting up and lying down, our eating and drinking, our doing, talking, thinking,—all are charged with weighty consequences of which we can understand the full importance only by reading our lives backward. What we really are is known to ourselves only: hence the world's opinion must ever be of the smallest importance, if we wish to live truly. What are you doing with your thoughts, convictions, talents, experiences, conceptions? This alone should give you anxiety: upon it hangs content or misery.

Life for us begins with consciousness of individuality. You must realize that you are one whose being and doing shall be unlike that of any other mortal, if you are true to self-conviction. However similar your abilities or surroundings to those of others, you know that in truth they are wholly different and that they can accomplish what no others can. From moment to moment, hour to hour, live and put the best of yourself into each. When this is done nothing else need trouble you,—you shall know the full meaning of peace. As the brain becomes stronger by frequent exercise, so the conscience becomes clearer by obedience to its laws. It is awe-inspiring to look back into past years, to see what we might have been had conscience been faithfully obeyed. Whatever we are capable of conceiving, we are capable of doing if we are but true, strong, faithful. But let there be no useless moaning over the past. Cling to the present,—it too will soon pass,—realize the full value of the gift. Now, at this very instant, be thankful for thought, conception, desire; bring strength out of them all.

Those powers of which you feel possessed devote to some noble purpose, spend your strength worthily. Do you not know that at any instant death, destruction, calamity, may fall? Do not, then, trifle,

indulge in ease and comfort. Gird yourself, stand erect, prepared to do, to endure, to be true to conviction, firm to principle. What others have done or are doing should be no criterion for you. If you are true to the light within, you will do only those things you know to be right, whether others approve or not. Judge yourself unflinchingly, unsparingly, by your own conscience, intellect, experience. Shrink with horror from doing anything against this judgment; regard it as transgression, however leniently others may pass it by. What is innocent for one may to another be a crime. Clear and unmistakable judgment can be pronounced upon ourselves only. We cannot be too tender, compassionate, lenient, towards others; nor too severe, exacting, determined, with ourselves. We know, as no others can, how we are tempted and tried; we know also how we are urged, entreated, strengthened to overcome. How can pride, vanity, conceit, exist in a soul that has once looked into itself?

NOT LIKE OTHER PEOPLE.

Why do you want to be like other people? Are they so agreeable, so witty, so brilliant, so charming, so everything that is admirable, that you should strive to be as they are? You look tired, seem weary, of this trying to mould yourself after other human specimens; and, after all, it begins and ends with trying. The thing itself can no more be done than you can make one horse like another horse, one bird like another bird. That animals, human or other, look alike, is nothing to the point. With the far more important fact, the mental character of men and women, lie the immense, the unfathomable differences. Here it is that you may justly protest, rebel, and exclaim, Why should I wish to be like other people?

In clothes, in behavior, you do well to conform, up to a certain point, to the customs of the day. To avoid singularity in these matters is to gain the independence that comes of being unnoticed. But as to character, there is not one valid reason why you should want to be like other people. On the

other hand, there are the best of reasons, absolutely vital ones, why you should not try to be like them. To begin life with this egregious error is to forge for yourself a complication of chains that must hamper you at every step; to continue life from maturity up to middle age under this painful pressure is to be chafed, fretted, tormented. It is living an absolutely false life, while everything within cries out for a true life. You are alternately goaded by your very self into escape from bondage and humiliated by failure, by deep shame over that failure.

The past has gone, and is beyond recall. Settle that fact well in your mind, and do not cry over it or bewail the irrevocable. Let it go; bury it! Bury it, but do not forget it. In that remembrance, bitter as it may be, lies your hope of a stronger life. Do not procrastinate. Begin to day, at this very moment, to ignore the old slavery, to act in the new freedom. Be yourself, whatever happens. Think, feel, act, in strict, unswerving accountability to yourself. Follow this régime conscientiously, perseveringly. Follow it through doubt and trial, through ridicule, scorn, through suffering, if need be, through martyrdom!

Not to be like means to be something else. What are you? what is your position in the world?

Ask yourself. What by birth, what by training, what by experience after becoming your own master? What, after these experiments of one or of many kinds, are you fitted for? Are you a social creature, adapted to society, its pleasures and duties? Or, are you a recluse, a thinker by preference, therefore a solitary creature? Reflect well upon all these points before you act. But having begun to act, do not hesitate, waver, or slip back into old slavish ways.

There may come a day when you cry, At last it is over, ended! What? This trying to be like other people. You have been foolish, lo! these many years, in trying to be what you were never intended to be,—like other people. Now it is over! The day came,—you recall it well; just where you were, how the day looked, how you thought, how you felt. You were at a gay foreign summer resort, pretty, picturesque, idyllic even, with its mountains, its forests, its sparkling waters. But it was not a place for you; it was for other people. You felt yourself enervated, depressed, isolated, crippled. You could not live mentally, could not think. You saw yourself appearing strange to the good people about you, unsympathetic, unlovable, repellent. You suffered from

that misapprehension; for in your heart you had only the kindliest, humanest feelings for the people near you. You could not be like them, but were constantly wishing you could do something for them. But no,—it could not be, it was impossible. Impressionable to a painful degree, you were bowed, bent, crushed, under the unhappy circumstances.

At last the light broke through the clouds! You saw the truth, that you were not by nature like other people. You did not belong to them, ought not to be with them in the close, unavoidable, yet restricted relations of life. You had nothing against them. They were polite, kind, good, happy in their families, in their amusements, in their pursuits. There was nothing in the least to object to in them. The difficulty lay in you. You were not like them,—that was the barrier,—an insuperable one for both sides. It was nobody's fault. It was you who were in a false position: hence you were unhappy, and, moreover, affected other people unpleasantly.

ON REGULATING ONE'S LIFE.

Regulating one's life,—your life, my life, for instance,—is there not something amazingly presumptuous in the attempt? You are what you are partly by inherited qualities, partly by training, partly by your own efforts and self-indulgence mixed. On heredity and training, alias education, in theory most thinking people are in accord. On regulating one's life, thinking people are so thoroughly in disaccord that the subject is of positively distracting interest. Parents, teachers, preachers, lecturers, journalists, authors,—all these have a direct and enduring influence upon whole classes of people. Where one man thinks for himself, tens of thousands are only too well content to adopt opinions the most convenient for daily use.

The one special principle of society here in our own country is to regulate, in reason, one's life. If this cannot be done absolutely well, it may at least approximate to that. Your personal, natural character must first be considered. In modern education that personal fact is usually the last con-

sidered. However, home and school training, good or bad, come to a close. You, man or woman of twenty, are now at liberty to think for yourself, to decide what your life is to be.

Young women—save in a few so-called privileged cases, when wealth and fashion decide the career—have more of that liberty than they seem to have; not so much as young men, of course, but quite enough to decide whether they shall give themselves over to social ambitions, to music, to art, or to domestic routine.

Regulating your life means simply this: doing your best to develop your strongest qualities. Whether a mechanic or a philosopher, whether a maid-servant or a fine lady, you are sure to have something in you worth developing. The common, lazy phrase, "I have no gifts, no talents even; there is nothing I can do," only proves the lazy conventional way of educating children. The boy who hates school might, with a wise private instructor, become the most ardent lover of science, of belles-lettres, of any one of the countless branches of learning.

It is a common fact that the most deeply reverent mind may dislike the cold forms of sectarian religion. The most sensitive, love-craving woman may, through fear or pride, appear haughty, indif-

ferent to men, when in society. Civilized life has this curious effect upon certain people: it makes them appear quite other than they are. A timid, pensive woman of high breeding never shows to advantage in society. A high-strung, affectionate man may yet have so little self-assertion as to seem to strangers indifferent, cold-hearted. Shyness is not at all peculiar to woman. It is entirely mental, therefore sexless.

Regulating one's life is so serious a matter that it might well be called the ethical principle upon which happiness depends. You who find it easy to regulate your life are by nature strong, self-reliant, therefore self-willed, self-satisfied. To see what is expedient or reasonable is for you to do it without consulting anybody else. Policy or good breeding may make you careful not to offend your neighbors, but on the whole you live your life bravely. You may not be a great light, but in your sphere, and even beyond it, you win respect. People in general have neither time nor inclination for analysis of character. They take their neighbors as they seem, as they act, as they talk. In a worldly sense, therefore, nothing is worse than to confess to weakness, to error of any kind.

If you are ignorant of the art of regulating life, you will naturally let somebody else do it for you,

—your husband, your wife, your clergyman, your favorite author, your intimate friend,—any one who chances to be in authority at different epochs in your life. If you are in the habit of thinking, if you see something in yourself that seems worth developing, if you are urged to strive, to do battle in a special cause, tormented by your selfhood to work towards a given end, then you are justified in regulating your life yourself.

Inherited tendencies, well defined, or, quite as likely, crossed and counter-crossed until they make you appear as inconsistent as a Rousseau or a Montaigne, will give you plenty to do. Early training, too, will have been imperfect enough to provide you with a vast amount of matter to be unlearned in maturity. Finally, your own youthful follies, your mistakes, your errors, your self-indulgences of the stage beyond youth, all these, combined with powerful and ceaseless influences from social surroundings, will make regulating your life difficult enough. Yet the attempt is worth all your strength, all your enthusiasm. It produces the best sort of life. It saves from failure.

MAKING PLANS.

First the idea, next the execution. Life worthy the name consists of these two forces. These views presuppose, of course, a fair amount of moral stamina. With a certain moral force at bottom—a force given at birth, and which, spite of mistakes, follies, and neglects, clings to us till death—we derive happiness from making plans. To regulate one's self is the first of duties. Only after this can any other self be helped. Our plans, then, should be these: to be firm and steadfast in developing the stores in our brains. Most of us have enough, more than enough, of mental accumulation. As middle life is reached, the hour comes for a giving out of what has been gathered.

O literary aspirant, whatever your sex, age, or capacity, begin by being faithful to the gifts given to you, by nature or acquired. You especially, woman brought up in luxury but not finding your best happiness in it, set aside trumpery and externals until your brain has had fitting care. Begin with that, give it the first hours, the best strength, the

most conscientious handling. Habits of luxury incited by a quick imagination are the mental barriers, the leaden weights, that hold one down to mediocrity. Fitted for a higher sphere in life, you loiter in the lowlands of commonplace subservience, in the enervating atmosphere of mean pursuits, in the depressing companionship of unrelated minds.

To feel yourself well endowed enough to associate with the best does not insure your place in the intellectual world. You must show as well as feel yourself, must show your mind as it is, give forth its natural bent with whatever growth may have come from training and experience. Give forth, give liberally, unceasingly, give in many directions, give at any cost, that man may see what you are worth, what not. The what not will be especially good for you. From that you will learn your place in literature, what you cannot do, what you are to concentrate your forces upon. The intellect has its conscience, its morals, its development, its working, and its work. The morals of the intellect are as well worth study as the morals of nations.

BEGINNING BUT NEVER FINISHING.

Have you, dear reader, so far done nothing for your fellow-creatures, although always intending, expecting, to do much? If so, confess it with its causes, for the sake of those now living, and of those who come after you. However humiliating the task, it is a useful confession. Failure is an ugly word. Lucky he who hears it only through the outer world, yet who still believes in himself, believes that other people, outside causes, have brought it about. Yet this cannot always be the case. There may lie before us, spread out in damaging evidence, countless proofs of failure solely through our own fault. The intensity of our suffering then no one save a similar victim can understand. One hears of a divine content, meaning that perpetual faith in self that belongs to the great artist, musician, or poet. They who believe they have failed in life know all about a diabolic discontent.

Yet why have so many failed in life? The cause is not necessarily vice, drunkenness, crime,—not

any of the so-called cardinal sins. The source of the intense horror of looking at and confessing life-failure is that the eminently moral, no less than the vicious, must admit, "I am a failure." The non-entity of many lies in this simple fact,—beginning, never finishing. The habit contracted in childhood, continued into youth, dragged on to middle age, ends in an ignominious sense of failure. Amid the wonderful appliances of modern education let children be made to feel, first of all, their personal responsibility in this matter,—beginning and finishing. A book, a game, a bit of work, an experiment on anything, in any direction, must be carried out, ended; this at whatever cost of patience or impatience, satisfaction or disgust. It is the principle, not the thing done, that is at stake; that in the child, for instance, determines whether a habit contracted is to make or unmake the future man.

But children, grown people indeed, begin so many useless, foolish things,—why insist upon these being finished? Here is precisely the point at issue: children and grown people learn through their own mistakes to discern the grand difference between wise and foolish. Two or three days, weeks, or months spent over a senseless object are not by any means wasted, if the worker learn from it the art of reflection. Why begin useless work,

why undertake never so trifling a matter, without previous thinking? Better far to be idle than to spend strength on profitless work.

The artist must have his picture in his mind before he attempts to portray it with pencil or brush. If he begin outwardly before the picture is matured inwardly, he will end as many before him have ended,—in non-entity. The same principle applies to every other art, to every trade, mechanism, to every pursuit, to every department of life, whether mental or material. The kind of thing engaged in is of little importance so far as character is concerned. The point at once momentous and impressive is,—finish one piece before beginning another.

The want of this principle has lost more than one of the stranded men and women now either clamoring for help or sunk in despondency. No hope for them! Life can be lived but once. Years, whether well or ill spent, exhaust the stock of vitality allotted to each mortal. The lost cannot be saved. But the young lives about us may be helped; the young, ignorant, blundering boys and girls,—who abhor preaching in proportion as they need it,—these are the ones to whom a principle is worth more than all else the world can offer.

ON BELIEVING IN LUCK.

We like to close our eyes and dream of fair women, of noble men, of angelic children. We like to fold our hands and think of the golden opportunities which are to bring to us comfort, luxury, joy. We like to persuade ourselves that we are born under a particular star, which accident precludes the necessity of hard labor, of patient, plodding, energetic action. We like to live in the present hour, quaffing eagerly every drop of pleasure our senses yield and deluding ourselves with the doctrine called natural rights. We, men and women, like to do all these things, and at the end of the doing come forward with preposterous impudence and declare our belief in luck. It is a superstition of the grossest kind. It is inherited, as all other superstitions are, from generation to generation. It taints natural impulses, encourages idleness, fosters self-indulgence, and subverts reason through sheer force of habit.

Of all stumbling-blocks in the way of honest work it is unquestionably the most formidable.

The weak men and women are tripped up by it. The strong ones, too,—although the ends they seek are different,—are liable to the same tripping up. A man believing in luck furnishes himself with complete credentials as to honorable intent and faithful application, whereas in truth he has not made the first effort towards earning a reference in the arena of work. With this belief wrapped close to his heart, he accepts condescendingly the kind of occupation requiring least attention and fatigue, as a temporary make-shift.

Something must soon occur, is the refrain of his thoughts. Something—in the form of gold, of reputation, or of friends—will presently fall at his feet and crave the favor of being picked up. Somebody—indefinite as yet in nationality or in character—will recognize the extraordinary merits of his individuality and offer a position and terms equal to their grade. While thus hugging his miserable superstition the years wear on, strength ebbs, the brain grows rusty, and opportunities vanish. The ennui bred of inertia spreads over his entire nature and defies moral science. Faculties of mind which exist without being used produce phantasms far worse to contend with than actual physical ills. To dream of monsters is more terrible than to encounter them bodily.

The man thus believing in luck inculcates the doctrine into wife, children, servants, and others subjected to his influence. Without acknowledging, often indeed without perceiving, the fact, we absorb opinions from those with whom we live. Our nationality, our circumstances, our neighborhood even, affect our tone of mind; but the most direct power swaying us proceeds from the human beings we daily associate with. Choice is indeed rarely permitted us. But if Nature subjects us to pernicious influences, she furnishes us likewise with efficacious antidotes. Thus every being capable of exercising thought may safely analyze the thing called luck. According to results ascertained, let him found principles, assert facts, and sow them broadcast for the benefit of other beings.

Women, from their position, are perhaps less exposed to the dangers of belief in luck than men; but they are not exempt. In the nursery, in the home circle, at school, ideas and principles hold the same importance for one sex as for the other. The boy with his hobby-horse, the girl with her doll, may both be made to understand that it is not chance but carelessness that irreparably mutilates the toy.

Girls imbued with this belief make no endeavor

to acquire habits of industry and concentration. They obey their elders from fear or necessity, confidently expecting the day of emancipation when they shall obey only the law of self. In the little world of school their experiences are of precisely the same intrinsic quality as those that await them in society. Believing in luck permits them to turn from every distasteful task and please themselves with visions of ease, of friends, of honor, of admiration, all these without personal effort. Launched into society, for the most part in our country with slight safeguards save personal character, girls are in special need of sound doctrines. Believing in such a false philosophy, they place no dependence upon the qualities called self-control and judgment, but rush recklessly in the wake of others who chance to be ahead. Marriage being the acme of luck, they make all minor things bend to that end.

If a girl of sentiment, she revels in visions of the hero who is to be conjured forth from chaos for the express purpose of pouring love and devotion at her feet. If of worldly tone, she is firm in the conviction that she is destined to a high social position, with aristocrats of both sexes ready to do her homage. If inclined to overvalue gold and glitter, she builds in fancy a structure so

luxurious that it becomes the envy of half her acquaintance. The knight who is to conduct her to this splendor is of far less importance than the splendor itself. The fortune which brings her gold and luxury will, she thinks, bring her happiness as well.

In the phases of life which follow matrimony the same demoralizing belief leads to endless trouble. Housekeeping in her estimation goes well or ill, not by her personal management, but by luck. Purchases, servants, children, everything in every department of her domain is subject to luck. To argue with such a woman is utter waste of logic and of all the cardinal virtues. The close of the argument leaves the woman fully convinced, not that she is in fault, but that she is the least comprehended and the worst abused of womankind. To rise in the morning feeling that the day's entire course is dependent upon chance is not conducive either to domestic peace or to success in business. Believing in luck is equivalent to believing that all our personal affairs will work themselves; that by some unseen agency we shall be rich, comfortable, and happy without care and assiduity.

THE DAY-DREAMER.

Trying to do many things usually results in doing nothing well. The trying to do many things describes the mental part of the day-dreamer. To dream is but a synonyme of to think. Even in very prosaic characters, the so-called thinking is a very mixed process, comprising self, wife, children, household and business affairs, neighbors, friends, church, charities, and the like. In the day-dreamer, his so-called thinking is infinitely more complex. In addition to positive needs of external life, family, friends, business matters private and public, there is the much more real, persistent, intense life within. He is himself only when not in the actual, tangible routine of his daily outer life. It matters very little what that outer life is as to nationality, rank, wealth, or poverty. He does not live at all in the present. His most serious affair, his most constant effort, is to lift himself out of his surroundings into the romance and poetry of his own mind. This realm is the perpetual, inalienable home of day-dreams.

A day-dreamer may be born a prince. If so, he spends his few hours of solitude in wishing himself born to a lower position, that he might live the happier life he dreams of. He may be born a peasant. If so, he turns away from his humble, vulgar surroundings to dream of the beautiful things he would see and enjoy, or of the great deeds he would do, if only he had wealth and rank.

These good people are not as useless as they seem. Indeed, looked at from an artistic point, they add much to the picturesque, romantic side of human life. They have, apart from the dream-faculty, usually other characteristics,—such as kind hearts, conscientious principles, strong sympathies, —which counteract the persistent inner craving to neglect the real duties of the day and hour. Especially is this noticeable in day-dreamers of the female sex. Viewed as to their characters, they are much weaker specimens than the dreamers of the opposite sex. A woman may long for the hour of solitude which permits day-dreaming, while forcing herself first to finish her daily routine of duties. While thus trying to finish, she is —in many thousands of cases—overtaken by sickness, misfortune, old age; worst of all, by that terrible Nemesis, the consciousness of years wasted,

wasted in struggling to do the wrong things. Compared to that, old age is a pure, tranquil joy.

Thinking is the day-dreamer's life. He does it incessantly, hence at many unseasonable times when it mars the practical things which no one can escape. Take a single day of his life; for let it be understood that he is not an imaginary person, but a real living one. His personality is painfully clear. It is sharply defined with all its shadows and defects, with all its inconsistencies and contrarieties. This personality is set before me in its twofold nature, the bodily and the mental.

You, my friend, were born a day-dreamer. That you could not help. You have all your life been living the life of a day-dreamer. This you could not help. You did not know you were what you were by nature. But now, to-day, with your eyes opened, knowing positively what you are, you are justly held to account. I therefore arraign you as a traitor to your inheritance of day-dreamer. Your vocation is as clearly defined as that of artist, musician, inventor.

To go back. Take a single day of this your present life. In its main points a single day is enough to show a person's whole life. In this single day, then, you show the error of a lifetime.

You are trying not to be a day-dreamer, struggling to escape what you were born for. Such trying, such struggling, of course, availed nothing. It simply exhausted you. There you lay on the world's broad field, inert, helpless, unhappy. This not because of a cruel fate, not because of your own iniquity, but wholly because of a false conception of things. Born a day-dreamer, you tried to make the world believe you could do other things better; whereas, had you lived the true, honest life of a day-dreamer, you could have done good work, would have been remembered, perhaps, long after your days on earth had ended.

What is a day-dreamer? One who thinks morning, noon, and night, who sees nothing in the world save matter for thought. One who intuitively looks outward only to absorb mentally. One who touches, feels, experiences, only to bring all within the laboratory of his mind. A day-dreamer is not, of necessity, a poet. There may be intense, ceaseless thinking without the power of poetic expression. But imagination there must be. It is, indeed, the chief element of the day-dreamer's character. He thinks of what was yesterday, or ages ago. He thinks of what might or ought to be to-day. He thinks of the possible good, bad, or beautiful of

to-morrow. Not only to you but to every other day-dreamer life is a tragedy of emotions. Let those scoff who will at such sentiment, as they call it. They scoff because they do not know what emotions are. No one can understand, therefore no one can sympathize with, the things unknown to himself.

FALSE POSITIONS.

You may be in one. Its source may be finance, profession, marriage, love. Being in it, you chafe, fret, worry, vex yourself with incessant questioning to which comes no satisfactory answer. You are tormented in thought, crippled in action. You find your days but a weary repetition of a tedious lesson, a painful dragging of disillusions, a martyrdom of the better self you believe in. Last and worst, there come hours which force you to admit that the bulk of your misery has sprung from your own conduct. Whether this was simply weak or actually wilful matters little as to results. To talk of other people, of others' influence, is but moral twaddle. The sole cause of your getting into a false position is in yourself.

Do you want to know your own follies, you need but look at, or listen to, your neighbors. Here is a man whose grumbling tells exactly what his false position is and how he got there. Things are looking queer, he says. Try as I may to escape hin-

derances to steady work, I am forced back into a false position. My struggling begins to seem a sheer waste of strength. Once I had a permanent hope, an absolute faith in my power to overcome. To-day, under this last stroke, this ten-thousandth, there comes over me that crushing sense of impotence, which, in every age, people attribute to fatality, to the gods, to God. An easy way to dispose of a vexing question, this putting on another the responsibility that in reality should rest on self.

False positions are peculiar to certain people. They are always in them. No sooner are they out of one, whether through their own struggles or through the assistance of friends, than they tumble into another. Age, experience, suffering, all seem powerless to effect a cure. Why? To every honest why? there is a satisfactory answer. Whether this be found in one's self or elsewhere matters little: the finding is the sole fact of importance. One man gets into a false position voluntarily, deliberately, another is drawn in, pushed in, dragged in by his neighbors. In the first instance it may be erroneous judgment, perverse sentiment, headlong passion. In the second instance it is weak will acted upon by strong will. It is in this weakness of will—a phase of character

closely allied to crime—that are found the majority of false-position victims.

Human failure,—mental, moral, social,—with its melancholy train of disappointments and disillusions, one and all, has its source partly in the individual, partly in heredity. Through ignorance or non-doing a man brings upon himself the ills he is now suffering under. Are we not frequently forced into unspeakably painful positions simply through choosing the wrong road? To accept this or that proffer of friendship; to go to this or that country; to act upon this or that impulse; to promise or to refuse to listen or to shut our ears; to obey or to violate personal judgment or conscience; to yield to the appeal of affection or the cry of passion; to deny the heart, to sear natural longings with iron conventionality;—of such matters is not the brain the sole arbiter? Does not its decision bring about the true or the false position?

Here is a ruined merchant. He repeats on all occasions to his credulous wife or indulgent friends that it was bad luck. Outsiders who are not credulous from affection know full well that bad luck is but a name for certain ugly facts. Mr. X. was careless, indolent, pleasure-loving. His principle of life was to let other people do the work which he

had the reputation of doing. Book-keepers and salesmen gradually came to know more of the business than the master himself. While endeavoring to stave off, with every conceivable excuse, he could not finally escape the hands of retribution,—ruin for himself, wife, children. Broken in health, unable to work, humiliated by enforced dependence upon his family, he is daily goaded by the cruel thorns of a false position. Does he or does he not see the cause? No one knows. He never, whether to family or friends, uses any other word save bad luck.

False positions as regards friends, acquaintance, household, are full of interest. Consider the countless irritating results of taking a servant of bad manners, of slovenly habits, of a chattering tongue, of any one of those characteristics of which a sensitive mind must detect the signs in a first interview. You did notice them, but in an unlucky moment of specious mental calculation allowed reference to bear the palm over innate conviction. Instead of following the latter unfailing guide, you weakly yielded to somebody else's judgment. The servant stayed with that somebody several years; hence must have good qualities, etc. False reasoning leads to false positions. You take the servant, and from the first day to the last are annoyed,

nagged, irritated, mortified, by precisely those characteristics whose signs you read in the first interview.

Easy enough to get rid of an objectionable servant? Not so; especially one well recommended. A woman has a proper pride in not changing servants, a kindly interest in the one taken, a wish to do what is fair and just to inferiors in station. To describe the domestic tortures endured from contact with a single coarse-natured servant would be impossible. It is a something to be felt, not described. But a servant may be trained, taught, improved? Yes, but the nature of a servant can no more be changed than can your own. And reading yourself, you are forced to confess that in the main points you are the same to-day as at the beginning. If you were dreamy and indolent as child, you are so as man, as woman; you are the same in all the gradations of mental or moral constitution. To refuse to obey mental instincts is for yourself a series of daily exasperations. The character of a servant cannot be changed by training or preaching. In spending your strength on the hopeless task you but place yourself in another false position. You are the harsh, hard mistress, always finding fault, never satisfied, whereas, in very truth, these results are but the inevitable

clashings of your fine-grained nature with the coarse one of your ill-chosen servant.

Another false position into which you may easily get, is that of confidante to an unhappy friend. It begins with sympathy on your part for certain misfortunes. You listen, you give earnest attention, heart-felt condolence; you are prompted to help with advice, with means, with influence, with every instrument within reach. This continues, goes into years and years, until finally you are rudely awakened from your dream of faithful friendship. You discover that your friend's unhappiness is chronic. His trials are not peculiar to himself but to the race, his misfortunes are but the consequences of his own unbalanced mind or perverted temperament. The case is a hopeless one, yet the moral invalid cannot see it, is unable to grasp the fact, clearly visible to others.

Society has plenty of these hopeless cases. The one important lesson here is the effect upon yourself of this false position. Powerless to assist in any tangible sense, you are yet drained to the core by the incessant demand upon your sympathies. Your position, doubtless, is ameliorated by your discovery of its falseness, but you cannot escape its miseries. At best, it can serve as a

warning for future cases. To be drawn into a friendship through sympathy instead of through mental affinity results in many curious and vexatious complications.

Here before you is a woman, living in the threefold misery of semi-poverty, dependence, and bitter hatred towards the dead,—the last an ugly flaw in a character otherwise admirable. It was engendered by selfish extravagance on the part of a mother. Left a widow with an ample portion for self and children, she had, slice by slice, devoured the capital intended to insure lifelong comfort for all. The daughter never forgave the mother this crime, as she calls it, and as she will continue to call it until the end. To that alone, she cries, I owe this my false position in life. My sense of human justice does not permit of forgiveness for the long series of cruelties thus inflicted upon me.

Yet, looked at by other eyes, not obscured by hatred, her position appears different. Pride of birth, love of ease, extravagant habits,—these, in reality, are the causes of this woman's present false position. These and one more important factor,—that bitter hatred for the parent who was the primal, but not the absolute, cause. This sentiment, overrunning everything, as a sentiment easily may when unchecked by reason,—the power

to appreciate both sides, the enemy's as well as our own,—this hatred finding a vent in invective, poured incessantly upon ears friendly and otherwise, may bring about social estrangement. Society has its own special sins and their inevitable Nemesis. One thing, however, it preserves intact,—a delicate sense of fitness. This, applied to sentiment, makes disrespect to parents a breach of propriety not to be forgiven.

HELP FOR THE AMATEUR AUTHOR.

Why should you write? is asked. Why should anybody voluntarily write? Is there not already enough, more than enough, of all things written? So I thought in former years, but I do not think so to-day. On the contrary, it seems to me that never can there be too much of written thoughts, emotions, sentiments, of mental conflicts, reverses, failures, victories.

No one can divine what kind of written message may prove helpful to another. You turn over a page of a seemingly weak, useless book that by chance has come into your hand. Suddenly you note a sentence that attracts your interest, that starts you off on an intellectual or ethical tramp that proves of infinite benefit. Yesterday you turned over one of those pages. The subject written about had been worn threadbare, so you thought at the outset. But presently the triteness disappeared and you found a disagreeable truth becoming fixed upon your own personality. It was

a mental flagellation needed to bring back your vagrant imagination to the straight, solid plane of actual life. It drove you into reflection, into wrestling with facts *versus* fancies.

The teaching intended for another had struck home to you. The fantasy your own reason sternly rebuked, but could not vanquish, suddenly received an effectual blow from an outside source. Help came, the tension was relieved, the conflict between imagination and reality subsided. Therefore you, my reader, who have all your life been given to meditation, will surely say with me most heartily, There cannot be too much expression of thought in writing. Write, write, continue to write, ye who feel it in you so to do. Let the pages go as they are, crude, rough it may be, but perhaps suggestive. Let them go together with the dreams of those hours when they were written. Then life ahead seemed delightfully long, overflowing with all sorts of possibilities. The years are slipping by full enough of opportunities,—slipping by, soon to be gone forever. How much is left? perhaps you question. Not much, at best, reason tells you. This present moment now in your hand is all that is certainty. Let them go, those odd pages, sketches, or what not, intended for future use, future finishing. Let them go forth in their triteness, their sin-

cerity, perhaps only outlines of what once stood completed before your mind.

But suddenly, it may be, the aspect of life changes. Dreams no longer satisfy, reality must be touched, grasped, held. Not what has been wished for, craved,—no, this has gone as something purely imaginative, as intangible as the blue ether above you. Imagination plays us odd freaks. Until recently perhaps it has been your will-o'-the-wisp, leading you, ay, goading you into every path save the tangible one of reality. Now, youth gone, it is serving you another trick—or purpose. It drives you into feeling that life is coming near the close,—that if anything is to come out of it, the life lived, you must quickly let go the intentions and cravings that once ruled you.

What lies there in those papers stored away for future use represents yourself. It is the best you could do at the time, whether last year or yesterday. What more do you want? Your craving for something better, higher, nobler, more beautiful, has kept you all these long years in bondage. Give out now, to-day, what you have written. Do not wait for the impossible,—in other words, for your ideal, for what you think you could do better. You may, perhaps, have no system in your mind.

If so, why try to make the world believe you have what you have not? System in writing is a good thing, but good only when it is natural to the person. Your system, however, or rather the lack of it, would not be natural, and therefore would be stiff, forced.

Poor, sensitive amateur author! You shrink from sending to the publisher your bescribbled crooked manuscript. You cannot bear the thought of having such rough copy exposed to general view in that big business house, beginning with the literary reader and ending with the compositor. You see them in your mind laughing at your scrawls. You want to avoid this if you can. But how? By rewriting sundry pages? Away with such folly! Have you not yet had humiliations enough branded on your personality? Enough of these mistaken ideas. More than enough of the finical weakness that mars the palpable end! Let go your manuscript! Whatever its look or its substance, let it go as it is! Suppose they do smile or sneer. Can that hurt your manuscript, interfere with the birth of your book? Away with such childish pettiness! Once and for all time be yourself, come what will.

AN AMATEUR AUTHOR'S IMPEDIMENTA.

DAY-DREAMS, delusions, illusions, impossibilities,—are these, at last, recognized as impedimenta? If so, light begins to dawn, and that is at least a beginning of progress. Here are some of an amateur author's impedimenta: too many-sided a character for strength; the tastes possibly of an aristocrat, personally and socially; the thoughts of a student, an observer, a moralist, a critic, a producer; the feelings of an artist, innate dislike of straight lines, of prosaic utility, of stiff, cold, colorless people and things; a craving for beauty, grace, perfection of form and movement. Yes, all of these are hinderances to mental life.

The amateur author in most instances fails to live earnestly. Living in earnest is easy to talk about. But doing it,—ah, try that for a single day, and tell the result. One tremendous fact there is to begin with. The idea of living in earnest must be one's own property, not borrowed. This idea, then, is a something born in one, always haunting, always vexing, always tormenting. We cannot

remember a time in our earliest child-life when it was not in us. Call it music, call it art, call it literary aims, anything that means one's very self.

Has your past life been a failure? If so, it is because instead of living in earnest, in accord with your own idea, the native-born sacred vitality in yourself, you have lived a mixed life. What other people expected of you was much more earnestly done than what your native mental instincts demanded. The past cannot be lived over again. But the lesson—the bitter, hard, precious lesson—of the past, keep that! It is hard-won, but priceless. It is the one thing that makes your living in earnest to-day a glorious possibility.

To be numbered among impedimenta is the lack of favorable conditions for mental work. By such conditions the amateur writer understands leisure, freedom from petty annoyances, domestic and otherwise. That the mind shall work normally, in brief, it is to be protected from the irritating influences of daily prosaic life. First, household companions may be entirely non-sympathetic as to one's aims and pursuits. They listen more or less patiently: politely would not be the right word. Much easier for strangers to be polite, implying, as the word does, concealment of real thought or feeling. Hearing you speak of your literary aims,

for instance, a friend or an acquaintance would instinctively repress his actual opinion of your ability or disability.

Politeness is a semblance of all that is gentle, sympathetic, acquiescent. It is this that makes intercourse with strangers so much more agreeable than that with domestic companions. The latter may be incredulous as to your aims and pursuits simply because they have seen so many of your failures. As soon as they see any tangible results of your mental life they will believe in it. Therefore do not talk at home of your wishes, your thoughts, your ambitions. Write instead of talking. Put the best part of yourself into writing. There you are certain of your listener. Even if the most caustic of critics, he must read carefully before he attacks.

Impedimenta in yourself, impedimenta through others, impedimenta through sickness, accidents, travelling, impedimenta through disasters private or public,—all these must have your closest study before you can understand them. After the grasping of these varied impedimenta comes the conquering of them. There are many people to-day quite old in years while so child-like in mind as to think they might have been famous if——. Each person has his own precious private catalogue

of ifs to show in self-justification for non-doing. It helps such persons to bear their social disappointment, their commercial bankruptcy, their art, literary, or stage failure. For the old there is often nothing left to live on except these ifs. It would be cruel to shake their belief. Better that they should die in error than to recognize too late that life-failure has been owing to their own ignorance.

For the young and for the middle-aged, however, there is much to be done by way of help. Let them learn first the meaning of impedimenta. Let them get it thoroughly into their minds, into their actions, into their whole personality. Only after that can they, with mingled humility and earnestness, teach others the meaning of impedimenta. To young men and women who possess mental gifts an immense importance attaches to first advisers. As in music, in art, in foreign languages, the first teacher is the all-important one. From him comes the principle which is to develop the germ in the scholar. Whether that germ be big or little, we still need the best teacher for the first lessons.

So is it in literary life. You who begin need the strongest teacher. By strongest, I mean the one who starts from the very root of things, from yourself, one who will make you feel that impedimenta of infinite variety are a part of your life, of every

life; one who will convince you that progress is simply a steady, daily working in spite of impedimenta.

Imagination is often the source of literary failure. Possessing a fair amount of imagination, one may become interested in so many things that he fails to do any one thing well. He is too many-sided to develop fully any one side. He is attracted by nature, by art, by people, by domestic or useful occupations,—in brief, by everything the world offers. An amateur author, then, if many-sided, rarely produces any good work. The same mind forced to work for bread would have produced a hundredfold more.

When the amateur author is a woman, the impedimenta are still more numerous. A sensitive woman is usually timid, self-distrustful, therefore yielding to those around her. She, for instance, with a strong mental life persistently goading her to produce, is yet hindered to an incredible extent by family ties,—this assuming, of course, that her family, say husband or brother, cannot be in exact mental accord with her. Self-distrust, too, has a peculiarly harassing effect on a woman of strong mental organization. Thinking incessantly without the natural outlet of production causes a damaging overflow.

For instance, such a woman writes because she cannot help it, but self-distrust makes her deem her writing of no value for publication. She writes and writes, but underrates her work. She shrinks from seeking a market for it simply because of self-distrust. This arises from what phrenologists call small hope and large reverence. In a woman sheltered from rude contact with the world it produces great respect for other people's ability, judgment, wishes. From childhood to old age there is always the tendency to believe others better and wiser than they are.

Writing of impedimenta, another big obstacle comes to mind,—womanly pride in household matters! How much mental life has an amateur author, if a woman, lost through that pride! She can estimate only too clearly, too nearly. She cannot put that estimate into words, but she feels it, a sharp, grinding, torturing instrument of self-reproach.

Womanly pride! Let her look at it boldly, fearlessly, and avow its results. Desire for an ideal household! That was the beginning. How long ago? When she first felt the pressure of responsibility, at intervals in girlhood, afterwards during longer periods in womanhood. Her native ideality touched by household matters resulted in this,—a

craving for spotlessness, prettiness, comfort for highest and lowest about you.

Domestic economy, under the modest alias of home, seemed to be her first and most serious duty. Until those endless petty recurring demands were satisfied she thought it wrong to heed mental aspirations. They were stoically thrust aside, compelled to wait until home was in order. Ideality turned towards the practical brings about this result,—a many-sided creature, good for nothing in particular.

In a man it makes the vacillating, spasmodic, erratic worker. He begins life ardently, tries many things, ends in failure. In the woman it causes ceaseless striving without accomplishing, ending in cutting self-reproach. Ideality makes her see the ought-to-be in domestic life, while that same ideality hinders the doing of the ought-to-be-done. Result, —clashing of thoughts, emotions, regrets, humiliations.

The awaking from this day-dream—yes, it may come after a while, but it may be late, very late, for life-work. Impedimenta recognized are not so easily thrown off. Family affections, conscience, mental aims, social duties, so called, are a hampering to mental development, at once positive and galling as chains. All these subject to ideality make early womanhood a ceaseless struggle. Had

hope been lost she could not have lived at all. Her hope was to finish her practical duties and thus gain the privilege of the non-practical author-life. Poor little woman! Timid, self-distrustful, humble to excessive self-humiliation, she drags through all her young-womanhood with these leading impedimenta on body and soul.

Out of that suffering comes the truth that women of such temperament should hear: Live your own life bravely. Accept the penalties of that living,—viz., harsh thoughts, bitter words, cruel slanders, all the mental kicks and moral buffetings that come from the unthinking crowd. Bear everything, and never give up trying to live your own life bravely. Conscience is as likely to go astray in one direction as in another. It may make bad seem good to you. Most of us could recall countless occasions when conscience, so called, led us away from mental pursuits. Study was the work nature fitted you for and urged you to do. It was therefore your simple duty to keep on and on in that direction. But if you were a timid young girl, a self-distrustful woman, were driven to and fro, now by conscience, now by ideality, until finally you grew into that strange character called a complex woman. Your native qualities beaten and battered out of shape, you could not appear otherwise than complex.

Mental gymnastics are likewise impedimenta to mental life. The amateur author has had more than enough exercise of that sort. No wonder that his writings are scrappy, jerky, helter-skelter. Mental gymnastics are useful when taken moderately. To continue them daily, hourly, is to spend one's strength aimlessly. Taking numberless notes is one most popular form of mental gymnastics in which the amateur author indulges.

Too many notes are as crippling to the author as too many models are to the artist. Suggestion is in itself good, but over-suggestion results in a superfluity that ends in despair. The artist who knows the art of finishing takes one model, not fifty, at a time. The author does the same. Instead of heaping up notes, he writes on one theme until the pages take some sort of shape, and then lets them go, polished or otherwise: the "otherwise" usually makes the best work, the kind that wins human hearts.

Have you fallen into the pernicious habit of taking notes? Do you now and then, in a fit of virtuous love of order, set to work to arrange, classify those notes? And all the time, while doing it, are you protesting against the drudgery, vexing your mind with the varied subjects rising up and spreading out one after the other, one running into the other,

overlapping confusedly, interminably, hopelessly? Finally, after hours of arranging, so called, what is the result? Instead of one chapter in progress or ended, you see before your wearied eyes a shapeless mass of notes. Your brain is bewildered, irritated, with the hydra-headed work, and in sheer disgust flings itself into any frivolity as a relief from that painful mental pressure.

A LITERARY WOMAN'S WORST MISFORTUNE.

What is it? Can it be missing matrimony? No. Losing her fortune? No. Losing health? No. Losing beauty? No. Now, these are all very serious, even lamentable, losses, but by no means the worst. Missing matrimony is undoubtedly what the world calls a dead failure. It looks upon you with pity, yes, even as being unfortunate. A long list of disadvantages arising therefrom, beginning with the physical and ending with the moral, might be adduced in proof. Somewhat the same might be stated of losing fortune, of losing health, of losing beauty.

But among misfortunes in general there is always one that is the worst, as you yourself look at it. I mean you, the woman of quick wit, sensitive, of liberal education, of student tastes and habits. Your worst misfortune is to find yourself at middle age in a false social position. Being there, you are without the companions—friends so called—who belong to your kind of character. An artist naturally has artist—or

artistic—friends, not exclusively, but chiefly. So it is throughout all ranks of genius, ability, profession, commerce, and the like.

You, then, the woman of literary qualities without the production that usually follows, are in a false position. Your printed works—whatever their intrinsic value—known to the world, would have brought to you certain acknowledgment. Whether praise or censure or even cold indifference, your social position, at least, would have been fixed. Being there, you doubtless could gradually have formed a circle of friends. The stronger, the more fearless your writings, the better established your position. Your friends at home, your correspondents abroad, your acquaintances everywhere, would all be on a social plane. Knowing your writings, people would know your character, be repelled or attracted in accordance. In brief, "like attracts like." To have near you the friends you admire and love—people of both sexes with whom you are *en rapport*—you must show yourself mentally as you really are. To paint pictures and hide them away in a closet would never bring to an artist his two great needs,—self-development and companionship.

You, would-be literary woman, who are so situated as to be forced to talk, to occupy a place

in society, to visit, to travel, to stay at home, to correspond,—to do all these things contrary to your natural self,—are enduring a woman's worst misfortune. Whether your own fault now or the fault originally of circumstances, matters little. To trace misfortunes to a primal source is sometimes useful. The object here is simply to state a fact in woman's social life. Reasons for your false position could of course be given, such as lack of confidence in your native ability, in your training, in your power to reach the heart of your contemporaries. But a truce to reasons. They belong to another day, to another chapter.

WHERE, WHEN, AND HOW TO WRITE.

A MIND of great sensitiveness often fancies that writing out-doors would be exceedingly easy. But upon trial it generally fails. Sky, atmosphere, birds, trees, rocks, water, everything in external nature affects such a mind like human faces and voices, utterly preventing connected thought. The author dreams, meditates, feels, but is under too much excitement to write. For this last he must be in-doors, in a room furnished mainly with books, the only companionship that does not interfere with individual thinking. Nature may be dearly loved,—we may revel in the warm sunlight, the cool breeze, the unfathomable firmament, the mysteries of vegetation, the ten thousand charms which each day and hour unfold themselves to the appreciative mind,—and yet love one other thing better. This thing is the luxury called thinking.

Too much thought interferes with execution. There are many to-day who would write more readily if their minds were less wealthy. The laws which govern the intellect are as unerring as

those which govern the physical world. In the first place, intellect must be allowed unrestrained exercise for its varied powers. Coercion, uncongenial employment, or overtaxing must be conscientiously avoided. Thought suggests thought. Hence the incalculable value of communion with other minds, although both reading and conversation must be prized more for what they inspire than for their direct information.

Thinking upon one topic frequently elucidates another, and in all difficult questions there should be great care not to worry or drudge. If a result cannot be seen clearly, it must be set aside until the mind has had an interval of rest. Enlightenment often comes when least expected and under most peculiar circumstances. By closely observing such phenomena we learn the uselessness of forcing a comprehension, be the subject what it may.

Intellect, with its innumerable subtleties and amplifications, must be taken as it is, and its weakness no less than its strength skilfully handled. Mental labor under healthful conditions is a source of calm delight. When this is not the case, we may know there has been imprudence, fatigue, or hurtful indulgence. Much has been said about the discipline of the intellect. It has its value, undoubtedly, but it is often over-estimated. What does genius know

about discipline? Is not the instinct of intellect, like that of conscience, worth a thousand times more than any teaching of school or of philosopher? Nature is the sole teacher who is wholly reliable. Her ways are seldom the ways of men. Her directions are: first, to comprehend; second, to develop; third, to use; and fourth, to consecrate.

Each master in art, literature, or science originates his own method, one different from but better suited to him than any other before heard of. The various modes of working in the intellectual world are most curious and instructive. Even among minds of the highest order, no two follow the same plan in the search for results. We should write when moved to it, and at no other time. What matters it if the work be crude, unfinished, unpolished? Is there anything in art which can be pronounced finished?

Why, then, all this lament about want of method, application, concentration? The mind—*i.e.*, the soul—must work out its own salvation. If with joy and hopefulness, it is well. If with fear and trembling, we dare not murmur. One who writes from inspiration cannot know what is to be his subject for the day. Is not the highest kind of writing that which will do most for the author and most for the reader? As the past has been, so will the

future be. Natural laws reassert themselves continually.

Looking around us to-day, do we not take in at a glance all the works that will live beyond their age? If a book is to live it must represent not one man's thoughts, but all men's thoughts. It must depict not one age, but all ages. It must indicate not one narrow line of conduct, but one broad enough for all mankind to tread. It matters not which vehicle of thought be chosen, whether essay, history, romance, or poetry. The indispensable condition is that it define principles applicable to man everywhere, throughout all time.

The subject and the mode of expression once chosen, change of scene, of habits, and of surroundings should be studiously avoided. Nothing is more injurious to the intellect than being forced to take in new impressions, see strange sights, or partake of social amusements. The more secluded the life of a writer, the more reliable his reflections. But prior to this seclusion there must have been actual experiences of life, a living in the world and mingling with all varieties of characters.

He who would write thoughts which are to reach the souls of his fellow-creatures must live as it were a hundred lives. He must see much, feel strongly, suffer acutely. He must realize in his own life the

extremes of joy and sorrow. He must evince the power of fathoming the profoundest mysteries of the soul.

In describing what he discovers, there must be no mechanical effort, no labored effect. All that comes within the range of sensibility, passion, or ideality must be felt and understood before it can be adequately represented in print. Nothing can be described at will. All must be first known and felt.

One who devotes himself to writing as to an art should never write a line unless inspired. When Nature urges us to a certain course she means something which we shall do well to heed. Inspiration must be gladly welcomed at whatever hour she may be pleased to present herself, and treated with the utmost gentleness and delicacy. If any odd hour could be used for the doing of the mind's behests, such easy conquests would lose their value. Can the musician compose by rule? labor to express a melody, break off, and renew it again at will? Impossible! He must, on the contrary, woo his muse with most patient assiduity and count self-sacrifice as joy, ere he can hope to win her gracious smiles. To be limited in time, to know that at a certain hour interruption will come, is enough to mar the conceptions of a sensitive mind. Irritated, vexed,

despairing, it feels that without more independence of character, more firmness to will and to do, its object will never be attained.

A mind in a healthful condition never dreams of asking, How much ability? How much can be done? Of what value? It regards authorship as simply the expression of ideas, principles, and fancies which have been given by an unseen Giver. It is not responsible for the abilities given, but only for the use of them.

The new author has one great difficulty to contend with. Whatever he writes with a view to possible publication becomes formal, stiff, prosy, different, so it seems to him, from what he writes for his own eye. He feels a restraint similar to that experienced by a sensitive man when in general company. Thoroughly at ease when alone or *tête-à-tête* with a friend, when in a crowd he is at once conscious of restraint and discomfort. The very differences of mind and character which he instinctively perceives check his natural flow of spirits. To a young author of sensitive mould the public is a miscellaneous crowd which he shrinks from mingling with.

Reproduction is one of the dangers into which a young author is popularly supposed to be likely to

fall. He reads much, he is easily impressed. How easy, then, exclaim his critics, to reproduce! Must it not be difficult to detach his own thoughts from those of the masters he studies? Upon this point the author himself, if honest, must be the best judge. When such a one speaks, it may be thus: "Listen, dear critics, and believe me, if you can. If you cannot, so much the worse,—not for me, but for you. Reproduction is a matter about which I give myself no concern whatsoever."

"So much the more danger," says the critic.

"Perhaps so; nevertheless, it is extremely pleasant to be able to tell you that upon one point at least my mind is wholly free from doubt and apprehension. To any one else it might sound like self-assurance, conceit, inflation, or what not. But to you my thoughts flow out as to one before whom there need be no more reserve than with myself. I want your candid opinion of my work; and how can you give me this unless you know me as I am? So sure am I that my thoughts, sentiments, and observations are my own, belonging to me by right of nature, that the bare suggestion of obtaining them from any other source calls up a smile of—for me—unusual self-complacency. Would that I were as sure of all else as of this fact! Whence this intense, ever-present desire to meditate, if there

is no power within to conceive and produce? Whence these ardent feelings, these earnest longings, these profound regrets, if they do not originate within?

"No, dear critic; whatever resemblance my thought may bear to that of another arises solely from the affinity of mind and soul. I am not tempted to steal, because already in possession of more than I can well dispose of. Once, I admit, the fear of reproduction did exist in my mind, for I could not avoid being struck with certain resemblances of thought and style. But after carefully sounding mind and conscience, analyzing all that entered my mental laboratory, I unhesitatingly enunciated the words, Not guilty."

Upon the whole, this question of reproduction is deeply interesting from a psychological point. How far other minds act upon our own must always be a matter of serious consideration. Nature unquestionably means that there shall be resemblances in all her children. But in mental no less than in physical attributes the variety in resemblances may be infinite. In studying the records of other minds we are continually coming upon thoughts that startle us with their affinity to our own. Strange, we murmur, I thought the same long ago. Yet

I never saw this man nor heard his sentiments before. How does it happen that I find here my own secret thought and cherished feeling expressed by another?

This meeting with congenial thoughts is the first incentive to the habit of making quotations. Certain ideas or sentiments make an impression. Without stopping to ask why, we are seized with a desire to transcribe and keep them near us. Page after page of a book may be read with interest possibly, but without any marked effect. Suddenly, without apparent cause, we come upon a sentence which attracts, rivets, electrifies. In this fact lies the proof that the great advantage of reading is less in what it actually gives us than in what it enables us to do for ourselves.

In a book, picked up carelessly, it may be, we read on until attention is fixed by a force beyond our control upon a certain passage. Instantly arises a desire to think and write upon the subject suggested. In all this the will has no influence; the desire, although excited by a fact or thought, in reality arises from the character of the writer himself. As his organization is, so he observes, thinks, and feels; but the ability to derive nutriment from the thoughts of others without infringing upon their domain depends upon moral force.

THE BEST WRITING.

THE scholar desires to have his researches stamped in the purest language of his country and age. Whoever helps to form the national taste in literature merits the gratitude of the world of letters. Naturally, then, we look to authors as the best practical instructors in the art of writing. And among them we give allegiance to those who by their printed works prove their knowledge and skill.

The critic gives his opinions upon manner and matter, calls our attention to beauties or deformities, pronounces judgment as to conception and execution, leads the indolent, unthinking crowd about him into his own special area of vision; and where scholarship and nobility of character are the basis of criticism, we owe a debt of gratitude for such assistance. Yet, for the unbiassed, independent opinion each student wishes to acquire for his own mental portion, there must be a direct application to books themselves.

How far character is revealed in an author's writings cannot be positively decided. Possibly

the simplest solution is to say, The written page tells us of the spirit or real part of the author, while it in no way enlightens us as to his mode of life. Noble sentiments may be on the page, while the actual life is in some particulars ignoble. Or the page may contain much coarseness and indelicacy, while the author lives an excellent life.

Writing is to the mind what manner is to the person. It may give the impression of something either far nobler or far meaner than really exists. Some writers would have far more influence if their mode of life were not known. We find it hard to give our teachers the reverence their writings claim when the actual life is found to be sadly out of harmony with the principles inculcated.

Publishing a book by no means implies confessing to the public. The public, composed as it largely is of unthinking people, must be regarded by the author in the light of a miscellaneous audience. Many minds of a high grade are doubtless there assembled, ready to listen and criticise. These, however, are in the minority. The majority consists of minds less mature than his own, who would, consequently, be startled and discomposed if they heard many of his theories or deductions. An author, then, would instinctively withhold many of

his thoughts, not because they are hurtful to mankind, but because many immature minds would fail to comprehend them.

All men are different. Intellectually, morally, we cannot find even two who have had precisely the same advantages of endowment or culture. Such differences are inevitable. And so are the impassable differences between intellects and hearts inevitable. No student would think of discussing religion with his coachman; no woman in society would touch upon the subject of social ethics with her cook; although in both cases there might be a thorough appreciation of their special services. Many people who are on a social equality with the author might be utterly unable to enter into his thoughts and feelings. The majority, in every community, comprehend only what they have been in the habit of thinking about.

To be abashed in the presence of others is to acknowledge ourselves more ignorant, more foolish, or more wicked than they. Who standing among his peers feels any doubts of his own ability, any apprehensions as to the effect his personality produces? Come what will of it, a writer should put himself into his works. Only thus can he bequeath to the world the powers given to him in trust at birth. During many years of life we live as do

other animals, without knowing why or wherefore. But if we pass this stage and enter upon a life characterized by reason, we dare not falsify the testimony which reflection and observation call forth. What the individual sees, feels, and knows must in some shape be handed over to other individuals.

Every earnest soul might speak thus: My experience has been different from that of some others. So also are my natural qualifications, and these are facts over which I have had neither choice nor control. Thus far there is no responsibility. But in the next aspect of this subject emerges the feature which decides action. I, the individual, because of the very difference in faculties and circumstances, am required to add my quota to the fund called humanity. It may not greatly help, but this is not my affair. A finite being is not expected to see infinity. If my life is to be of any value to other lives, it must be lived without the slightest calculation. I must follow my impulses because they are mine, not because they are believed to lead to a given end. Fearless, outspoken thoughts, then, are the only ones worthy a place in literature. Noble, pure lives are the only ones worthy of remembrance in the hearts of our fellow-creatures.

ORIGINALITY IN READING.*

In taking up a book to read, how often we are, as with people, far too good-natured for our own comfort! If any one doubt this assertion, memory will straightway give a list of all those persons who have bored him during past years, but whom he listened or talked to because he thought they expected it and would be hurt if they did not receive such attention. So with certain books, which from the first half-dozen pages weary or irritate us. Instead of closing them at once, we have plodded on, chapter after chapter, partly from curiosity, but more from courtesy towards the author,—the feeling which shrinks from judging before all the facts are fairly known. Thus we often spend hours over books that give us nothing but fatigue.

What makes us read these prosy books? Other people, the voices coming through newspapers, magazines, and similar unreliable sources. Should this curiosity awakened about a book by some chance word be studiously repressed? Is it un-

* Written in 1869.

pardonable folly to neglect what we know is real mental nourishment for very doubtful amusement? For of all friends the mental ones have most power over us; they are, too, upon the whole, our safest, most reliable guides. It matters not how or where we meet them. We neither observe their dress nor care for their circumstances. We are not afraid of offending them, we can call upon them at any hour or in any mood.

No pleasure is so entirely satisfying as the gaining of new ideas. Sometimes, in the most unexpected places, we come upon facts which every one ought to know, but which, hitherto, have escaped our observation. This, then, is the great advantage of liberal reading, of knowing many authors, many languages: in each we may find something we have sought in vain elsewhere. In this we find the answer to the question, Is it unpardonable to neglect what we know is good for what may prove to be doubtful amusement? To be a thorough reader, no lifetime suffices; but even partial acquaintance with books is a thousand times better than none.

Especially should it be enjoined upon young women to read more generously, to devote more attention to substantial nourishment, history, biography, philosophy, science. With none of these

problems, of course, can they become thoroughly acquainted, but their energies will be enlarged and strengthened; they will become better fitted, in all respects, to cope with the daily duties of home and society. New ideas are absolutely essential to a healthy development of character. The mind cannot stand still; if not nourished with a judicious means of exercise, it will seize an injudicious one. Our young women have not too much but too little knowledge for the ordinary purposes of life. No amount of prosperity can indemnify for a barren intellect. Women, especially, stand in need of this precious elixir called culture, confined, as they often are, to an unvaried routine of home duties.

What should one read, is an often-asked question. In my own case, nothing, I believe, has so helped my mental development as the reading of biography. It is like having a circle of wise and loving friends ready at all times to come forward with help, instruction, and encouragement. I have never yet read any life of man or woman that I did not derive positive benefit therefrom, feel myself enlightened, cheered, strengthened. In the main characteristics men are more alike than they think: hence the value of penetrating other minds and discovering the springs of action, capacity of

thought, moral calibre. From what horrid fears have I not been relieved by the words of comfort spoken by these dear friends; from what complications guarded, from what dangers preserved!

From biography to history the transition is easy. In looking at the past, whether it be one or five hundred years ago, the first difficulty which presents itself is the immensity of the prospect. Lost in wonder, the eye and mind wander over space, for a time incompetent to make any special observations. By degrees, however, the whole scene becomes more familiar; the gazer, according to his state of mind, finds his attention attracted to certain points. The whole history of even one human life can never be written. The longest term of years, the fullest amount of industry, would not suffice for the work. For thought is the occupation which—acknowledge it or not—fills up the greatest part of that life. And who shall be found gifted enough to describe that process? If, then, the complete history of one human being cannot be written, what shall be said of communities composed of myriads of these same beings?

Were all the thinkers of an age to apply themselves to writing its history, but a small portion of

it would see the light. However many volumes the historian fills, they are, nevertheless, his own version,—the facts, incidents, follies, reforms, as he apprehended them. From a number of versions, however, we learn various facts, hear varied explanations, surmises, theories. These taken into our own minds—not absorbed merely to be reproduced, but subjected to an honest process of reflection—gradually result in what we call opinions and principles. To read history thus is to learn from the mistakes, absurdities, and shortcomings of past ages the lessons that may help to elucidate the difficulties of our own day.

Each age manifests its individual progress. Its strong and true souls, its workers, search out and use all they are capable of managing. The descendants of these true souls, whether blood-related or humanly related, profit by the toils and sacrifices of their predecessors. In every age man shows a great aptness in adapting himself to change in learning to look upon miracles as things of course. Surrounded by the most striking evidences of man's inventive skill, we have daily proof of the numbers of mysteries yet unexplored. The scientific truths once penetrated by only a handful of superior minds are to-day familiarly discussed by every one.

As Hume well says, The good or ill accidents of life are very little at our disposal; but we are pretty much masters of what books we shall read, what diversions we shall partake of, and what company we shall keep.

Whatever you read, rely upon your personal instinct, follow nature in your choice of books as closely as in choosing your friends. Look over a catalogue, in or out of a library, and select. You will need no one to tell you which subject interests you,—history, fiction, science, music, religion, drama. No matter which one it is, follow implicitly the mind's direction. Following this course for a given number of years, you will have no difficulty in deciding of what your mind is capable. Originality in reading precedes originality in thinking. In your own choice of books, then, there can be no doubt, no hesitation. As to advising other people, consult not your own taste at all, but that of those who ask your advice. Above all things do not recommend authors, but individual books. All authors worth the name have different moods, which may be read between the lines in their books.

PLEASURE IN BOOKS.*

To come into the study, to glance at the shelves laden with their precious freight, naturally gives rise to the thought, What should we do without them? How unspeakably dull and lonely we should feel if lacking these companions! How they nourish, sustain, and delight! Can, in fact, any living companionship compare with the lasting pleasure books afford? From fellowship with other mortals one may gain much strength and happiness. But in the close, intimate, uninterrupted communion which books give we cannot help feeling ourselves wonderfully soothed and enlightened. All we desire to know—and how insatiable is the desire in a born reader!—of heart, intellect, experience, we find expressed clearly and definitely. Then, too, the never-to-be ignored advantage of books is that we can have our mental food when hungry. At times the mere thought of discussing philosophy, theology, or psychology is

* Written in 1869.

utterly distasteful. Conversation, even with the wisest and best of mankind, is only weariness at such times. We are not in the mood for contact with the world. But with books how different! Here is no compulsion, no effort of will or of conscience, no sense of courtesy or of obligation, but a spontaneous giving up one's self to enjoyment at the most favorable hour and opportunity. Without fear of interrupting or molesting, we go to our chosen friend and commune leisurely, delightfully. Is there not less drawback here than in any other form of earthly happiness?

With Ruskin, for instance, one volume was sufficient to show me the calibre of mind and heart, to convince me that here was a friend in whom I could trust. Some readers would have gone steadily through one volume after another. Not so with me. I felt strongly attracted, knew he was my friend, felt sure I could call upon him at any moment and get the needed strength, advice, and inspiration. Yet I left him for the time being to pay attention to others in whom a temporary interest had been awakened, perhaps by some of Ruskin's own words. Is not this often the case? But, however many others we may become acquainted with through such wanderings, the author who has led us into these mental by-paths

must always remain what he was at the first. It is not true, as some one has stated, that certain authors are at one time everything to us, but afterwards they can do nothing more,—that for us their work is finished. No; like friends, their mission is endless. Upon finding that heart and mind assimilate, we yield to the influence and think of the author ever afterwards as a most valued companion.

Books, then, give us the best of life's benefits. Here, and only here, can there be close intimacy with the noblest intellects. However poor our station, however mean our trade, we can still in leisure hours associate with the aristocrats of thought. There are born thinkers, just as there are born musicians and artists. Yet in early stages there are weary hours of doubt, painful ones of struggle. At this juncture the experience of previous thinkers comes to the rescue. Whoever devotes his life to thinking must of necessity acquire special skill. Choosing a master, then, in the subject that most interests us, let us look for one who has the greatest natural aptitude combined with the widest experience. Let us take what we read into our own brain laboratory, study with due earnestness, and then—reject or utilize according to conviction.

To return to the pleasure found in books. It is twofold, for not only is the present hour gratified, but the future is provided for by enlightenment. What a meagre, wretched, wearisome thing existence must be for one who has never known communion with other minds! No wonder is it that people grow weary of the routine of physical life, and suffer under the pressure of petty, daily-recurring cares and annoyances. If happiness be deemed essential for every child that comes into the world, let parents and friends look to it that the mind be well cared for,—not forced, crammed, or misdirected, but dealt with fairly, honestly, and tenderly.

How a book of bold exploration, of indomitable labor, invigorates one! Its effect upon the mental organization is that of the cold plunge-bath upon the physical: it creates a healthy nervous current. We realize of what difficult things we, though human, are capable. It matters little how many books are written upon the same subject. Readers are as numerous as writers, and various are the ways by which the ear and heart are gained. People cannot feel interest in the same things at the same time. Certain books are read and talked about, but, to our own surprise, we feel no desire to see them. This is not necessarily indifference to the subject. Cares are, perhaps, weighing upon us,

certain thoughts fill our minds to the exclusion of all else, duties demand our time and energy. So the book now passed by unnoticed is later read with eagerness; the subject now uncared for becomes after a while the absorbing thought.

How little idea some people have of the true pleasure, the real value, in books! Otherwise could they ask, Why do you have so many books? have you read through these many volumes in your library? Surely you could not finish them in a lifetime! Why purchase more before reading these? Such people do not in the least comprehend the often made statement, that books are like friends. We want them with us, around us, even though we cannot know all in their hearts and minds. As well say, Content yourself with one friend until you have searched him through and through; it is folly to know so many men partially! Books are society; they take the place of real, loving, feeling, companionable people, a few of whom it may be our good fortune to know intimately, but with whom, for the most part, we can only be on friendly terms, and know their style, manner, tone. If a book has suggested only one idea, has it not performed a mission to us? But books, even the purest and most ennobling, cannot bring comfort, peace, pleasure, or entertainment when

the soul is out of tune. At such periods they will all be left untouched, unopened, or at least they will not be enjoyed. When the soul is disturbed or is at war with itself, whatever be the cause, it is a mockery to seek peace from without, from other minds. With books, as with the other delights and joys of life, time and place are everything.

Shall we find our pleasure in the old books, or in the new? In both, I answer. A new book is as a guest just arrived from a foreign land. We give it the warmest, most courteous welcome of which we are capable. If we have heard its name previously, our interest is doubled. We feel as if it had brought us a letter of introduction. To a genuine lover of books a new book has a peculiar fascination. It is a revelation from another mind, and this is in no degree lessened if the author is known to us, either personally or by reputation. We may have known him in society, in the busy working world, or on the street. But in this particular phase we have never yet known him. Our interest, then, is aroused to see in what manner he conducts himself, whether he will be more or less interesting, wise, or agreeable than we expected. What genuine pleasure in carrying a new book

home, as a thing of which we know not yet the value, but amuse ourselves by imagining the contents!

But do not, my reader, if you would have pleasure in books, be guilty of that abominable habit of marking them. What if you do admire certain passages, appreciate certain thoughts and sentiments. Can you not enjoy them and profit by them without disfiguring the book by pencil-marks? Is your appreciation of the author enhanced by soiling the pages? Even if you find a personal gratification in so doing, cannot the reflection that there are others into whose hands the book may come after you restrain you from such inconsiderate conduct? Nothing is more irritating to a true lover of books than to read one that has been thus treated. There is a perpetual desire to quarrel with the previous reader,—a feeling aggravated by every fresh mark as the pages are turned.

PEOPLE OF THE BRAIN.

People of the brain are the only ones who are entirely satisfying. Let me explain. The people we love are the men and women we think about, desire for friends, wives, husbands, companions; men and women on our own intellectual level,—more than that, far more important even,—our peers in the subtler qualities of character called refinement, culture, good breeding.

But, says the world, these are people of the brain. Look long and far, spend your life in the search, you will never find men and women who come up to your ideal. The world is half right, half wrong. People of the brain do exist, are, perchance, close to us, can be had for the seeking. If not found,—as is, alas! too often the case,—it is absolutely our own fault,—fault including ignorance, indolence, aimless drifting.

People of the brain mean simply the men and women who are companionable, who meet us on the best ground of our own individuality, on the ground of thought, of sentiment, of training. You want

too much, says the world; you must take people as they are, not as you wish to have them. Very good advice for attaining popularity, if that be your chief object; not good, if you want companionship, that highest kind of happiness.

Take friendship as a condition open to all, irrespective of birth, age, fortune, of those external points of such tyrannic influence in the question of marriage. Can we aim too high in choosing our friends? Decidedly not. Indeed, it may be said, in all soberness, that our friends, so called, fail to satisfy us because we have allowed ourselves to be chosen instead of choosing, as we had the right to do and ought to have done.

Look at your list of friends in the past and confess how few were chosen by your own individual tastes, how many were thrust upon you through circumstances,—that is, your own weakness of will. Kindness, sympathy, helpfulness, tenderness,—all these may be liberally given, when needed by people within our reach. But the sacred gift of friendship ought never to be given until the noblest part of the inner self is satisfied that it has met an equal. This by no means asks for perfection. On the contrary, who among the imaginative class, people avowedly hard to please, fastidious, is not painfully conscious of his own personal defects and deficien-

cies? No; such a one, in seeking a companion, asks, not for perfection, but for a striving after it, a striving after something better than now is, whether in education, in manner, or in mode of life.

People of the brain exist only in books; you never meet them in real life; hence you have no friends, lead too lonely a life:—so speaks the world. But again it is only half right. What if you are lonely? Life is not a pleasure-trip. If you take it as such, middle age will find you in an unhappy condition of satiety, disgust, and self-reproach. Moreover, if you are without friends because of an imaginative temperament that produces fastidiousness, you have an infallible cure at hand.

If imaginative, you must have the artist-nature. Even if not a producer, you have the love of art which makes the amateur or the critic; and, whether the one or the other, you cannot suffer from solitude. The man of imaginative temperament, whether artist or art-lover, knows well that his ideal never can be embodied. Yet this knowing does not prevent his being content in the society of men and women of like temperament. Is it not proverbial that we see no defects in those we love? This, however, implies a blindness which never outlives passion.

Better to take it thus: the defects of those we

love do not annoy us because the foundation of mutual love is similarity of temperament. Artists, musicians, actors, for instance, have worldly intercourse with various kinds of people, while really feeling entirely at ease only with their fellow-artists. Art of the highest kind is destined for solitude. Men and women of artistic nature, then, do but share the lot of their tribe. Their search for the something corresponding to or, at least, approaching the image in their own mind leads them into out-of-the-way corners, where they meet none save explorers like themselves.

Imaginative people are as necessary to society as the practical kind, the so-called workers. In literature imagination is the source not only of poetry but of the higher kinds of prose, as romance, the drama, philosophy, and psychology. It produces eloquence through the law of affinity. The lawyer defending a murderer is temporarily in full sympathy with his client. Imagination sets vividly before his mind the temperament, the temptation, the opportunity, which led to the crime. It is not that the lawyer is defending the latter, but that he compels his mind to look on one side exclusively. The keener his imagination, the more convincing his argument, the more glowing and irresistible his oratory.

Imaginative people are predestined to pensiveness, melancholy, discontent,—words but partially expressive of the states of mind they represent. The happiest among them, perhaps the only happy ones of their class, are those devoted to art. Here and here alone may be found the opportunity and the permission to express the demon of ideality, so persistently goading the mind to discontent. In practical life imagination is a huge stumbling-block against which mind, sentiment, and tastes are continually wounding themselves.

DULL PEOPLE'S WIT.

It has occurred to me that it might be a comfort to many good dull people to know, first, that they have wit, and next where it lies. It would have been so to me years and years ago, when I thought myself helplessly dull and never dreamed of even a slight compensation. I knew how unattractive dull people were, how their mere presence cast a shadow over some others,—I knew this, and sometimes imagined myself one of them. It was very hard, was even a deep chagrin. But nobody ever told me that dull people had wit, if you only knew how to find it. Where? Below the surface, so very far below that it never is seen at all by the so-called bright, superficial people. Mental talking—dull people's wit—shows itself there. You, for instance, confess to yourself and perhaps to one other self that you belong to the dull set. Yet how often in solitary hours you have suddenly caught yourself in mental talking, not brilliantly compared to some other people, but brilliantly for you! You think of some one you admire, imagine yourself meeting him, and lo, you are not dull. Your tongue finds

plenty to say and just the right thing for the moment. What a pity, you muse, that my mental talking should be so much better than my other kind! And that other kind is the only one current in society! Dull people are not wanted there. They act as marplots, actually spoiling the natural flow of fun and frolic.

No, you do not belong in society,—you belong to solitude. There and there only do you find your wit, whatever its grade. There only does your mental talking take place. There only do you meet people to whom you can talk easily, fluently, frankly. There you have not the least shyness, no discomfort of any kind. There you meet people on a plane. The position is one of equality, therefore of ease, of warmth, of masonic freedom. Mental talking means mental companionship. Probably you will never know the latter out of solitude. Possibly, too, you may know it in real life,—this last only upon one immutable condition: self-development put into form.

Study, yes, hard, faithfully, year in, year out, incessantly. Study books, study people, study nature, study self,—this last the most difficult subject of all. But study is only the first step. The second one is production. Exhibit your picture, print your book, utilize your invention. Study is but

the consuming of other students' knowledge: their deductions, their discoveries, their earnestness, are the fuel for your own mental fire. But to be only a consumer is to be but a sorry student,—one altogether useless both in his generation and afterwards. The result of true study is to make a producer. After the acquisition of mental means comes the disbursement to others less advanced than yourself. The same exactly applies to material wealth. He who acquires a fortune immediately seeks the best ways of spending it.

Take heart, then, dear dull people, who never succeed in society, fashionable or other. That your wit is not current enough for daily use, at table or in drawing-room, does not prove its absence from your mental estate. To see that you are one of the dull people is in itself a proof of wit. That it is not of the jovial, sparkling, rollicking sort does not mean that it is worthless. To enjoy other people's brilliancy shows a certain kind of wit in you. There is the wit of appreciation as well as the wit of providing.

MENTAL ENDOWMENTS.

WHO among living Americans is the man of greatest intellect? asks the New York *Sun*. First of all, what is intellect? Who is to be the judge? Naturally, one and all among thinking men and women of their own country. That is, the subject of intellect can be reflected upon, criticised, judged, precisely as other subjects may be. Every man is at liberty to use such power of thought as he possesses to discuss any subject. This, of course, does not make his conclusions valuable to the world at large. Yet he himself may be satisfied that he sees enough for his own purpose. This, for the most part, is applicable to average persons of either sex.

To those above the average,—that is, to men and women born with a thinking mind and so situated throughout life as to be enabled to cultivate that native faculty,—to them come the most valuable conclusions. Therefore, to know the best that can be known about human powers of thinking, you must go to those who have made it their life study. Yet even then you are not to be satisfied with the con-

clusions of one or even two individuals. You must listen to many, in various countries, under varied conditions, after countless experiments and experiences, before you place confidence in their mental opinions. This includes the whole subject of criticism.

When are you yourself entitled to judge or to pass criticism on the subject of intellect, as to the minds of your contemporaries being small or great? When, in short, may you justly consider yourself independent of other people's opinions? For this there is no age, no period, no possible limit. Self-asserting people of either sex begin when yet children to pronounce judgment on everything they see or hear. Timid people are up to old age as shy and shrinking in expressing their opinions, however strong, as they are shy and shrinking in manner. Temperament never changes. It is a something born in men, inseparable from their lives. After life-long struggle with it, the strongest character can at best only modify or conceal it.

A richly-dowered nature is like a large estate,—capable of producing much, yet if badly managed it becomes a source of endless worry and chagrin. Look at the life-models close at hand. Select one of the best mentally endowed persons of your acquaintance. Let it be a woman. Intellect is

sexless,—this is one, at least, of the non-disputed questions of the day. Men have better chances for developing their mental endowments, chiefly because they are exempt from the endless household duties that fall to the share of women. Then, again, young women—save those who are strong enough at the start to assert their mental force—just when their minds are freshest and strongest are expected to be in and of the family. They have domestic life, dress, varied accomplishments, church, society claims, visiting in suburbs and country, etc. They are in most cases simply overpowered by attempting too much. Their mental aspirations lead them to make too many attempts in as many different directions, including, it may be, history, philosophy, fiction, poetry, ethics, as well as domestic and social life. It is impossible to do any one thing well when the mind is running on many different lines at one time.

ARISTOCRATS OF INTELLECT.

THESE stand so high above their fellow-men that one may well hesitate before passing free comment. Yet so grateful am I for their existence—in the past, in the present—that it seems but simple justice to make some slight acknowledgment. The realms of philosophy, fiction, poetry, history, science, shine with the glorious insignia of these aristocrats. The world does them reverence, gives them their full meed of homage,—if not during life, at least after death. They rule the world by hereditary right. They have a hold upon it which nothing can shake. Revolutions may occur, temporary governments follow, but these are merely interludes in history. The passions having abated, people are swift to recognize their own true interests. However ignorant they themselves may be, they must, by a natural law, stronger than even passion or prejudice, bow to the power of intellect.

The laws of a people may be imperfect, but they are, after all, far better to live under than lawless-

ness. Whatever of good is found in them comes from the highest intellects. For this good, sooner or later, people universally are grateful. This sentiment produces loyalty to hereditary rights.

Every nation, every form of civilization, produces its own kind of intellectual workers. Climate, custom, mode of life, all tend to the development of special doctrines, codes, opinions, conceptions. But in the main thinkers are all the world over alike. Delving into the mysteries of physical life or exploring the depths of soul, one and all are animated by the same desires, tormented by the same doubts, stirred by the same hopes. Costume, language, habits, manners, all belong to a particular nation or age. But thoughts, motives, desires, sentiments, are universal, immutable. They were the same eighteen hundred years ago as to-day; they are the same to-day as they will be eighteen hundred years hence.

Aristocrats of intellect stand apart from their fellows. They enter the world with a greater supply of brain-force; they receive better care. The native force and the training combined make them stronger thinkers, stronger actors, than their fellows. They do with ease what the plebeians of intellect can do only after long mental drudgery. With equal steadiness of purpose the first will far

outstrip the second. But if the plebeian excel in that steadiness, he may reach the topmost round of fame, while possibly his originally more favored contemporary may be found languishing on the way.

GENIUS AND ITS LACK.

I LIKE this short, simple definition of genius: "Genius is but the highest expression of nature." * Genius is but another name for originality. One of the first proofs of its possession is the daring to admire, to like, to enjoy what you recognize as appropriate to yourself. There is but one standard of genius, and that is the self that throbs and speaks in you who write, who sing, who invent, who paint, who carve, or what not. Its first and last signs, its universal, perpetual, infallible proofs, are an intense egotism. Tell me of a person who shows that in some form, and I should look for and expect to find genius,—latent, struggling to bud, it may be, or already partially developed. After long and ardent study of the subject, I am fully convinced of the truth of the statement. Belief in self, to the extent of disbelief in everybody else, yields that mental strength essential to personal independence. And solely

* Henry Giles, "Human Life in Shakspere."

through this personal freedom can any grade of genius be evolved.

Genius is but one word out of many to express selfhood. You yourself must help yourself. No one outside yourself can dictate what your work or your play shall be. Genius is but another word for mind, intellect, and the ego. Analyze one and all and you find the same substance,—power of thought. The gradations of thought mark the epochs of primitive man and the ripe scholar. A little intellect, a big intellect, a little soul, a big soul, a weak selfhood, a strong selfhood, are all terms purely relative.

Infinite in number, multiform in degree, are the gifts of genius. The kind that evokes my highest admiration is the practical one that develops its natural strength in spite of every outward obstacle; and of these obstacles the greatest, the most formidable, are other people,—rivals, enemies, friends, blood-relations.

I have been led to consider the definition of genius through being conscious of my own lack of the gift. Proof of that lack lies in an innate reverence for other people of high grade, regard for their mental, their practical, their scientific, their philanthropic, their every kind of noble work. My admiration

for others prevents the self-development I dream of. Literature fascinates me, art attracts me, high-bred people charm me,—and all these interfere fatally with literary work.

And you, be you man or woman, of like temperament, born with the tendency to admire and reverence other people, to believe instinctively that they are your superiors in most things, likewise have not the gift called genius. Accept the fact, accept it and make the best of, ay, profit by it. But not to possess genius means to possess some other quality. For instance, after long years of admiring and reverencing other people you come to see something in yourself worth developing.

Here is a crucial test of that something being worth the trouble. Belief in yourself for what you are,—not a genius, no, but still a personality, if developed, of intrinsic worth. If developed, there is the point to fix your mind upon. As you are to-day, it may be, you feel yourself of no use, of no ornament, of no value to anybody, to any circle. As you may be, whether next year or a score of years hence,—that is the highest of all problems for you to solve; not what your countrymen or your contemporaries can do, but what you yourself can, after training, do, be, or carry out. This sort of personal responsibility in the

question of living is of infinitely greater moment than genius.

Genius may do at a bound whatever it undertakes under inspiration. Genius never asks permission. It ignores precedent, defies criticism, *creates* out of its own personality. How do you know this? asks the practical man. I know it, answers genius, because it exists in myself. There is no fact on this visible earth of which I am so certain as what this self tells me.

Genius struggling with his work is scoffed at by the world. The work finished, that same world falls on its knees and worships both work and worker. Men or women with genius belong to the world. No one asks or cares where they happened to be born. The so-called selfishness of genius is simply the intensity of a rare selfhood.

You who have no genius, but simply a strong reverence for things that betoken mental beauty and force, must learn the art of faithful, patient working. Out of that will grow the encouragement that leads to content and peace in your vocation. Once thoroughly committed to your special groove, you will never be fretted by the futile idea of wishing yourself more gifted. You will be happy because of your self-development, of your doing as well as possible what nature intended you to do.

Doing that, your life is a complete one. The greatest genius can do no more.

Yet another view of genius strikes me. You who bemoan your incapacity, your littleness,—what have you done to test yourself as nature made you? How much of the littleness you recognize in yourself is the result of idleness, of subservience, of worldly custom? Born, say, to a condition of ease, surrounded by manifold temptations to mental drifting, how do you know your own actual calibre? That you are nothing to-day is by no means a proof that you may not become something to-morrow. Nature's intentions are balked by manifold petty obstacles in the shape, it may be, of affluence, luxury, worldly influences. One way is open to every one who chooses to consider personal responsibility. To live your own life worthily, whatever your condition of birth, whatever your mental calibre, is the highest of human aims. Doing that, you need not worry your mind concerning results.

Genius in a woman has a harder world-battle to fight than genius in a man. The woman has her natural timidity, modesty, self-depreciation,—in short, all the drawbacks of her sex,—to fight. Intellectual force is so uncommon in a woman's writings that the crowd invariably expects the

woman who displays that force in her productions to represent it also in her face, manner, conduct. Hence that crowd is disappointed, quasi-indignant, if a woman strong in writing is not strong in her behavior. Thoughtless people cannot understand that, while the mind may be strong, the heart may be exquisitely susceptible. Genius requires tender exhortation mingled with unceasing encouragement. Especially does genius in woman need the practical aid to be found, as a rule, only in a conjugal companion. Intensity of thought and passionate emotions rarely find forms of beauty unless aided by the tact of world-wise men. Genius—whatever its shape—vanquishes the prejudices of society, revokes its most crushing verdicts. Yet genius does not win its triumphs without some toil, patient doing and undoing, stern self-denial. More than any other must a woman of intellectual force show her courage through silent endurance, through tender hypocrisies, through heroic struggles between irksome social customs and her own ardent sensibilities.

ACTORS AND ACTING.

A GOOD play has the same effect upon me as a good novel. For the time I am as much absorbed in the page of life-history spread before me as if it were real. One character amuses, another appeals to the heart, another inspires repugnance. All the mental faculties are in turn excited, all the soul-chords touched and played upon. I come away very tired, but feel that there is good reason for it. I have enjoyed a great deal in a short time, and pleasure of any kind is exhausting. Acting is an art which specially deserves the title intellectual. It is not only that the text must be learned by the actor; he must do much more than that. He must put himself into the mind, heart, and soul of the character he personates. He must feel himself a king, a slave, a hero, a villain, a lover. Feeling it he will act it and sway the audience as with a magic wand. But this feeling is not a voluntary matter, is not the result of study even; it is a direct effect of imagination. With this faculty an actor may confidently throw himself into the breach and win distinction in proportion to his fidelity to his cause and his

bravery in action. Without this faculty he is merely an aspirant; no study, no application, no devotion, can ever carry him beyond mediocrity.

Yet, even with this essential, much, very much more is needed. A man might have the thorough appreciation of his rôle resulting from a vivid imagination and still be a poor actor. To do a thing well requires not only a special faculty but special development. So well fixed is this truth in average minds that we learn to expect excellence only where hereditary traits seem to sanction probability. For what does hereditary imply but an accumulation of tangible or of mental forces? Under ordinary conditions an actor's children look upon acting as their natural element. Their voices, language, movements, gestures, their games even,— all indicate the direction of mind and feeling. This continued through several generations, with proportionate culture and fidelity to art as art, must finally produce an actor or actress of genius.

Which country of the present epoch furnishes the best actors and actresses? For, apart from genius, apart from mental gifts of lesser grades, nationality has a marked effect upon this art. In a country where classes are distinctly marked, as in Europe, special attributes are handed down from

generation to generation. A tradesman's modes of thought, of living, are adopted naturally by his children. They take their several parts in the household or in their social circle cheerfully and easily, never dreaming of any change of position.

So in all the different branches of society, from court-life to the lowest strata, manners, usages, and modes of life are fixed by statute. Thoughts and feelings adapt themselves readily to absolute certainty, and bring about correspondent results. An artisan, born of artisan parents, bred to his art with no other ambition than to perfect himself in it, will of necessity make a better workman than one who spends half his youth in trying different kinds of occupation. The same law applies to every kind of mental, or mechanical, or social pursuit. Apart from the innate facility there must be a life-long application to its development. This principle insures excellence and yields a possibility of perfection.

That genius on the stage should be so rare, so isolated a fact, is inevitable, owing to the variety of gifts demanded. A musician may be illiterate while able to give full expression to his art. A poet may be uncouth in personal presence yet thrill the world with his song. A painter may be grotesque in feature yet produce pictures of exceeding

beauty. A sculptor may be deformed yet create forms of admirable symmetry and grace. But for the actor, ability to act is merely one among numerous essentials. As an imitator of human nature, a reproducer of traits designed alternately to amuse, instruct, enchant, and terrify, the actor must start with a liberal supply of native attributes. First, as to personal advantages, his form must be shapely, agile, pliant, capable of expression through movement, attitude, gesture; his features pleasing through symmetry, attractive through adaptation to sentiment, humor, passion; his manner a forcible exponent of both beauties and deformities of character; his voice of wide range, boundless flexibility, prompt to interpret the diverse emotions of comedy or tragedy. Next, as to mental requisites, he must combine swift apprehension with tenacious memory, keen analysis with poetic fervor, logical force with artistic delicacy. To see an actor possessing all these qualifications in a state of culture can happen but seldom in a lifetime.

THE CRITICS CRITICISED.

Reviews of books possess a strong interest for all people of literary tastes. Whether the books themselves are new or old, we like to hear how they stand in the eyes of the critics. An author's first book finds its way to the reviewer's table in company with many others. Does the reviewer ever think of the extreme anxiety with which the young author awaits the opinion which is to seal the fate of his first-born? Not that the author looks to the reviewer for a certificate of ability. A man is not necessarily conceited because he feels the existence of power within himself. He did not create it, he never dreams of taking any credit to himself on that score. He knows it just as he knows his stature, his features, his manner. The opinion of the public, then, makes not an iota of difference as regards the actual ability he possesses. But it makes a vast difference in other respects, and these make him keenly susceptible to criticism.

Book-reviewers may be classified thus: honest, flippant, non-committal.

The representative of the honest type does not pass judgment upon a book because of its title, its publisher, its dress, its antecedents. He reads it with unbiassed mind, and, speaking from an impression actually made, tells the world his opinion in the best language he can command. While this opinion is stamped with truth, it never deviates from courtesy, never becomes tinctured with intolerance, never makes the subject wince under irascibility.

The reviewer of the class we may call flippant is like a blasé man of society. He has seen everything, tried everything, felt everything. He refuses to be interested or surprised; he is incapable of being moved either to admiration or to indignation; he regards with studied contempt every new-comer who is not heralded by external attributes or introduced by some one of mark. Such a critic ridicules sentiment and sneers at earnestness. His natural manner is one of alternate gross exaggeration and wilful misconstruction. Putting his shallow judgment upon the matter in hand, he takes from it whatever of solidity it may possess and pronounces it purely ephemeral.

A reviewer of the flippant class has a withering effect upon books. He makes them seem worse than they are, because his readers see them through

his flippancy. He thus ignores not only the particular book under review, but all books. He degrades the calling of letters simply through his own unworthiness of belonging to it. To fall into the hands of such a critic is like being exposed to the gaze of a vulgar crowd. However great our discomfort, we cannot escape the ordeal without appearing to beat a retreat. We endure what is unavoidable while mentally scorning our tormentor.

Of this style of reviewing a book we give a few illustrations from life. "'Essays on Social Life.' The volume with the above title is remarkable in two respects,—first, for its contents, and second, that it was written by a woman. It consists of twelve essays, entitled Education, Amusements, etc. Strictly speaking, the essays are little more than nicely-fitted mosaic-work of the thoughts of others. Almost every page contains a quotation, and the volume might be called Some of the best thoughts of F. G. H. I. K., and many other authors."

Enough this to prove the charge of flippancy. To begin by saying a book is remarkable for its contents, and in the next breath assert it to be nicely-fitted mosaic-work of the thoughts of others, is too palpable a contradiction to need comment. A book made by inserting the thoughts of others

cannot be remarkable. Indeed, it must be quite the reverse,—commonplace. Now, if a book be thus made,—merely "nicely-fitted mosaic-work," it is but just to stamp it as belonging to the class of compilations. By all means let the author hear his work called by its right name. But to call it remarkable and commonplace in the same breath is flippancy of the most reprehensible kind.

Yet another illustration. The book under review is one upon certain phases of human nature. After mentioning the general purport of the volume, the critic says, "The art of writing about so vague a subject as human nature consists, in a great measure, in putting well-worn thoughts in a new setting; this approach to merit is hardly to be found in this book, and there is not enough newly-discovered truth to lighten up the somewhat verbose statement of what has been thought out and uttered already time out of mind." The flippancy here manifested is, first, in designating human nature as a vague subject; second, in affirming that the art of writing about it consists in putting well-worn thoughts in a new setting. Who save a critic of the flippant class would dream of calling human nature a vague subject? Is there any man in existence who thinks himself vague? who thinks the people around him vague? who thinks health, sickness, joy, and

sorrow vague? who thinks war, famine, pestilence, poverty, vague? or wealth, luxury, and happiness vague? Yet are not all of these very clear attributes of human nature? If human nature is vague, then nothing is distinct, nothing is definable, nothing is describable.

Again, who if not flippant would assert that writing about human nature requires merely the putting of well-worn thoughts in a new setting? Little effort, indeed, would be required to make a book, were this all. Instead of well-worn thoughts in a new setting, we contend that writing upon human nature demands prior thinking, feeling, suffering, enjoying. We do not want well-worn thoughts, but new experiences related by a new individual. The setting is of far less consequence than the thoughts themselves. Slight, indeed, must be the appreciation of human nature as a study, if it deem well-worn thoughts in a new setting the highest round of the ladder in the mind's observatory!

A non-committal critic requires an interpreter. He caresses and belabors with the same hand, and performs both parts so calmly that we are at a loss to divine his true sentiments. To illustrate: A new book, the first one of its author, is under re-

view. "This is in no sense a remarkable book," says the critic.

Very well, says the author, mentally in perfect agreement with the dictum.

Line second: "Its thought is healthy, its tone unexceptionable, its style vigorous." The author looks again, and with a sentiment of surprise. The first line had not led him to expect this drop of elixir.

Line third: "Indeed, our only objection to it is a negative one. It does not meet a demand that has long been felt, and, after all, this is a tolerably safe criterion in literary as well as in material products." The author looks puzzled, and mutters to himself, H'm! the only objection a negative one! Certainly this is more than I expected! But what is this about not meeting a demand that has long been felt? Continuing his soliloquy, he says, I knew nothing about a demand, and certainly had no intention of meeting one. I wrote because the thoughts came, not because I supposed they would suit any particular person or purpose. Nothing surely was farther from my intention than this. Tracts, pamphlets, monographs, these I had always understood were written to meet a special need or situation. But a book I have hitherto looked upon as just as appropriate for one period as for another.

It must have an aim, and if it have not, it merits severe handling. But to have an aim means something wholly different from meeting a demand.

Line fourth: "There are here brought together many excellent things bearing directly or indirectly upon the subject. The author gives a multitude of extracts and from the best writers. For this we may thank him. It is certainly more creditable when a thought has been well expressed to quote the expression entire than to steal the idea and mar it in doing so."

The author sips the elixir, but finds it tastes bitter. Again he soliloquizes: The critic likes my quotations, it seems, but evidently supposes they have been pressed into service to cover my own paucity of ideas. I myself had supposed they were brought forward in support of my own preconceived sentiments. Not one of the thoughts in those quotations that had not pre-existed in my own mind. Otherwise why should I have selected just those thoughts and no others? Is not sympathy the test of our own feelings? The expression, I grant willingly, is far superior to mine. The difference is that between master and pupil.

Line fifth: "But is there nothing good in the book? We answer, yes. The predominant principles very nearly meet our own. Whatever we

may say of the originality of the author's thought, no one will doubt the extent of his observations or the general lucidity of his style." The elixir has regained its original flavor.

Line sixth: "We are in doubt whether the author intended any intimate connection between the different parts of this book or not. It might have ended with Part I. and have fulfilled the promise in the title, or it might have continued through double the number of parts and have remained as incomplete as it now is. On the whole, we are glad that it did not choose the latter course."

Again the author is somewhat surprised, and repeats involuntarily line fifth, which gives credit for lucidity of style. Can this last exist if the reader is left in doubt as to the connection between the parts of the book? As to the incompleteness of the volume and the critic's satisfaction that there are not double the number of parts, the author cordially assents. To him the book is incomplete in the fullest sense of the word; and as to making it twice as long, he had too much consideration for his readers and himself.

Line seventh: "However, although, as we say, the book is not a remarkable one, it may be added to the family library not only safely but profitably." Finis!

The above critique is one drawn from life. What opinion of the volume could be gained from such non-committal phrases? Favor is so carefully balanced with disfavor that the words might be construed either way and make the same sense. In the name of authors—young or old, good or bad, brilliant or stupid—I protest against non-committal critics!

DEFENCE OF THE PRESS.*

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S libel on the press of America is so manifestly written under excessive irritation that it hardly deserves calm criticism. Save under such an abnormal condition it would be impossible for a scholarly writer to make such an assertion as, "On the whole, and taking the total impression and effect made by them, I should say that if one were searching for the best means to efface and kill in a whole nation the discipline of respect, the feeling for what is elevated, one could not do better than take the American newspapers. The absence of truth and soberness in them, the poverty in serious interest, the personality and sensation-mongering, are beyond belief."

Taking this alone, a thoughtless reader might well believe it were time to suppress, if not the whole newspaper fraternity, at least his own particular morning and evening papers. Taken, however, by a thinking reader and with other statements in the same article, that bitter sentence of condemnation calls forth the observation that

* A reply to Matthew Arnold. Written in 1888.

Mr. Arnold must have been very angry when he wrote those words.

No one would assert that the press in America is perfect. Seeing that men and women are behind the printed pages, reasonable critics do not expect superhuman qualities. Faults there are, of course, plenty of them. Yet these seem few when we think of the power of the press for good. Even its exposures of vice are beneficial to the community. That villany should be properly punished requires a fearless showing up of the villain. But here it may be said that newspapers, like novels, medical books, or even philanthropic researches, are not intended for children. The press of America, as a whole, is to-day so immense a power for good that it needs no praise, fears no censure. For enlightening the people, for stimulating them to true progress, both mental and moral, the press is second to no other force, whether school or church, law or society.

All that Arnold says in harsh criticism about America might apply to England, Germany, or any other civilized country to-day. America differs from others only in its youth, its vigor, its enthusiasm. Boastful because young—is true of a country as well as of men and women. Yet is not England, is not Germany, is not France boastful,

each in its own way?—a way naturally, because of age, more prudent, more diplomatic, more reticent, than that of America. At heart all countries are the same. Human nature in America is not one whit different from human nature in England.

Arnold himself says, "So far from solving our problems successfully, we in England find ourselves with an upper class materialized, a middle class vulgarized, and a lower class brutalized." Take heart, dear Americans! Nothing worse than that frank statement about England to-day has ever been, or can ever be, said about America to-day. In very truth, a great writer is like a great speaker,—he is but human. Hence under irritation—as Arnold manifestly was when writing the above—the great writer is liable to say disagreeable things which he himself would afterwards earnestly wish unsaid. A great writer is as liable to mental irritation as any lesser man. Mr. Arnold could hardly help being irritated when he read in a morning paper the very unpleasing description of himself which he himself quotes.

Take this self-contradictory statement of the American people: "In what concerns the solving of the political and social problem they see clear and think straight; in what concerns the higher civilization they live in a fool's paradise." Could

any country receive higher laudation than the first half of that sentence? If in the opinion of a foreigner America has indeed reached the height of seeing and understanding "the political and social problem," she may well be proud of such a reputation, may well be pardoned a little strutting and spreading of wings. Few among the American thinkers of to-day honestly believe their dear country to have yet reached that exalted condition mentioned by the eminent foreign thinker, for he is quite right in stating that "There are plenty of cultivated, judicious, delightful individuals there. They are our hope and America's hope; it is through their means that improvement must come."

Precisely these same words are to be said of England, of Germany, of France. The masses in America are what they are in every other country, rude, blunt, uncultured, passionate, hence as a whole meant to be governed by the few. Mental superiority is to-day in America and in England no less a force than in ancient or mediæval history.

Again, consider carefully this statement which has caused much needless albeit natural honest indignation throughout the country. After saying of England as well as of America that "a born lover of ideas and of light could not but feel that the sky over his head is of brass and iron," Mr. Arnold

adds, "The human problem, then, is as yet solved in the United States most imperfectly; a great void exists in the civilization over there; a want of what is elevated and beautiful, of what is interesting."

Alas for the feelings of the "born lover of ideas and of light" in any country of the world! This "born lover" may be a poet or a poetic person of either sex, may live in America or in Europe, but, wherever he may live, he is ever the same isolated being, whether poor or rich, who feels "that the sky over his head is of brass and iron."

Complaints about the press not being moral enough in tone, taking too much notice of wickedness and crime, "ghoulish glee" over sensational facts, adultery, divorce, *et al.*, are nonsense. What is the press? Read the newspapers of a past century and compare them with the history of that same century. Do the same with the daily and weekly newspapers of to-day. The press is not a preacher, not an art-critic, not a musical authority, not a philosopher. The press is no more than it professes to be,—the faithful mirror of the day. Its duty is to report, to state as clearly as may be what actually takes place in the community and in its neighboring or distant communities. Life as it is to-day is the picture the press attempts to give the public.

MATTHEW ARNOLD NOT A POET.*

Poetry analyzed, dissected, becomes dull prose. As well tear a butterfly to pieces, as well spread out the leaves of an exquisite rose and lecture upon the defunct beauties of insect and flower. Poetry is as incapable of description as beauty or music. Only a poetic mind can give a presentment of poetry, a mind in which imagination predominates. A poetic mind may produce a poet, an artist, a romance-writer, a critic. In the case of the poet, imagination must exist in excess of every other attribute; in the case of the critic, imagination is held in check by reason. Here you find a philosophic mind, one capable of recognizing both true poetry and true psychology. A critic is by no means to be expected to execute the thing, in art or in literature, he criticises. In addition to those natural qualities an able critic must have had liberal opportunities to study the objects he criticises: first the natural qualities, next the culture that makes them available, trustworthy.

* Written in 1888.

Is "Sohrab and Rustum" poetry? The author himself called it a narrative poem. If I were asked to describe it frankly as it struck me on the first reading, the answer would be: a dull tale told in solemn, stilted, prosaic words. It is plain prose spoiled by an attempted poetic effect. It is a composition the labor of which is perceptible in every line, but specially irritating in its comparisons. For instance, after the lines

> "And from their tents the Tartar horsemen filed
> Into the open plain; . . .
> As when some gray November morn the files,
> In marching order spread, of long-neck'd cranes
> Stream over Casbin and the southern slopes
> Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,
> Or some frore Caspian reed-bed, southward bound
> For the warm Persian sea-board—so they stream'd."

Why bring in this simile about "long-neck'd cranes"? It can add nothing to the impressiveness of a great army of men marching, and spoils the effect by breaking thought,—giving a fact of natural history amid war and its dread passions.

Then follows the description of the army:

> "The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's guard,
> First, with black sheepskin caps and with long spears;
> Large men, large steeds;" etc.

Oddly enough, in all the twenty lines of this picture of an Oriental army there is not a word to indicate the faces and forms and passions of the warriors. We read of their outer look:

> "Light men and on light steeds, who only drink
> The acrid milk of camels, and their wells. . . .
> Of the Tartars of Ferghana, from the banks
> Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards
> And close-set skull-caps."

We read of

> "Kalmucks and unkempt Kuzzaks, tribes who stray
> Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kirghizzes,
> Who come on shaggy ponies from Pamere."

To give the garments without touching upon the features or motives of the warriors is to leave out the most forceful part. The second simile is singularly out of place:

> "As, in the country, on a morn of June,
> When . . .
> A shiver runs through the deep corn for joy."

Simile number three follows closely:

> "But as a troop of pedlars, from Cabool,"

(here follow nine lines to illustrate how pedlars cross a mountain,)

> "So the pale Persians held their breath with fear."

If that be poetry at all, I call it very weak. Why go on? The whole is simply a story narrated in Sir John Malcolm's History of Persia, one far better suited to prose than to poetry,—even of the ringing inspired sort that carries you beyond prosaic details, "sheepskin caps," "troop of pedlars," etc.

No natural poet could choose a theme prosaic in its nature. Nor could the natural poet compose his lines if not in the mood, not inspired. In "Sohrab and Rustum," from first to last, you feel that the author first read about the subject, then studied it, then composed the lines. The whole tone is strictly prosaic, heavy, measured, much more tedious than history. In the latter you do not expect poetic descriptions, but the imagination quickly suggests them at mention of romantic incidents. In reading a poem, on the contrary, you have a right to expect. Not finding what is promised, you are disappointed, irritated. Why call prosaic lines on a story related in a Persian history a narrative poem?

Brush aside tradition, clear your mind of the critics, prosaic or poetic, turn away from the big, thoughtless, dashing, live-for-to-day public! This done, take your favorite poets of old, Byron, Shelley, and Keats. Drink again of the well-remembered vivifying wells of poetry in those pages! Drink

deep draughts of the sparkling elixir! Drink, drink, until you feel yourself far, far away from the bustle and dust and worry of these present, working, pushing, money-getting days. This absorption in your favorite poets,—those enthroned by the twofold power of your mind and heart,—continue it days and days, weeks and weeks, until you feel yourself thoroughly saturated with the spirit of poetry as you believe it to be. Then—after the excitement has subsided, when you feel yourself calm and dispassionate, yet firm in your convictions as to what poetry is and ought to be—then, I say, turn to Matthew Arnold's poems. Read with all your mind and heart; give yourself up unreservedly, earnestly, and let your judgment speak freely its verdict.

But Matthew Arnold is a Professor of Poetry at Oxford, some one remarks. The title has a superb sound. Take it, however, in its absolute meaning, and what do you find? Can any man anywhere be or become a Professor of Poetry? Would it not be equally illogical to have a Professor of Genius? Poetry cannot be taught. Why, then, have a professor for its teaching? Poetry is manifestly the work of a poet. He, if any man, should understand his art, hence be a teacher of it. Where

is the poet who would consent to be a teacher of his art? Would the idea, even in the greatest straits of indigence, ever have entered the head of a Byron, a Shelley, a Keats? No; the poet is not a teacher. He is a singer. His art is not acquired, cannot be taught. As impossible for a poet to impart his skill to another person—be he never so receptive—as for a Beethoven or a Liszt to impart his gifts. For a university to have a Professorship of Poetry is an absurdity. That a man should accept that chair is a proof of his lack of poetic genius.

A poet is born as he is, a man mentally unlike all other men, hence incapacitated for the ordinary routine school, college, or professor discipline. He learns intuitively what other men of prosaic nature spend years of plodding over without learning at all. A man can learn only those things his mind is capable of learning. Nature gives as she chooses. What each man or woman has must be accepted as final.

All the best things of certain so-called poets I should call simply prose. This, for instance, of Browning:

> "I count life just a staff to try the soul's strength, educe the man—
> Who keeps one end in view makes all things serve."

Is there, then, higher genius in poetry than in prose? Two things have always been very clear to me: in poetry of the so-called best poets there is a great deal of plain prose; and in prose of the best sort there is a vast amount of poetry. Where, then, is the distinctive mark of greatness, of genius?

WALT WHITMAN'S SO-CALLED POETRY.*

OPEN "Leaves of Grass" at random. Suppose the first of the Leaves to be "Native Moments." The title is good,—the only thing good, indeed, in the verses, so called. Such moments come to every man, to every woman. The kind of nature in those moments is something for which we are only half responsible. No one can change the brain or the heart nature has given. At best, it can but be modified by careful training. At worst, it but acts out its iniquity or ferocity. "Native Moments," then, are fitting to write about. The vulgar boor has one kind, the sensitive poet another kind. What we have a right to assert is that prose and poetry should be relegated to their respective places in literature. Read "Native Moments" and say in which line or sentiment you see the faintest trace of poetry.

"Give me the drench of my passions, give me life coarse and rank."

* Written in 1883.

This one line is quotation enough to express the idea. Let any one who desires "life coarse and rank" take it. There is a superabundance of such pasture in the world. It is not with a man's native moments I would find fault. But to call plain, outspoken prose poetry, to set before us the common every-day talk of a crude, coarse, prosaic thinker and bid us bow to poetic genius, is absurd. Every man has a right to live as he chooses. Every woman has the same right. In this idea which sounds all through "Leaves of Grass" Walt Whitman shows a strong, healthy nature.

But sound philosophic ideas are not to be confounded with poetic ones. A philosopher is one thing, a poet another. They are no more the same than a songstress and a woman preacher are the same. When a philosopher, then, begins to poetize, to put into verse what belongs to prose, it presents the appearance of sham. It is a putting on of another man's garment, one too big, too fine, wholly inappropriate, ludicrous, distasteful to a sound mental judgment. Let the singers sing, and, whatever fault we may find with the moral, we can yet listen with patience or pleasure to the song. When not singing the singer sinks to the common level of human beings.

In the same way let the prose writer write in his

clearest, most intelligible words the thoughts conceived in his brain. He too when not writing is but a common mortal. This is life, this is nature, this is truth. What must we say when a prose writer insists upon a continuous masquerade in a poet's mantle?

> "I dance with the dancers and drink with the drinkers,
> The echoes ring with our indecent calls," etc.

The barefaced vulgarity of such lines would, of course, be inaudible and invisible to a person of avowedly low tastes. But that the framer of such lines should claim the title of poet is effrontery at once brazen and ridiculous.

Open again at random. "Song of Myself," another promising title. If a man be stronger, broader, more beautiful, more truthful, than the herd, there is nothing better to write about than self. But here less than in any other subject need there be singing in prose. Philosophy is not fitted for verse,—not even for the blankest of blank. Let us see how Walt Whitman sings of himself.

> "If you would understand me go to the heights or water-shore.
> The nearest gnat is an explanation, and a drop or motion of waves a key.
> The maul, the oar, the hand-saw, second my words.
>
> No shutter'd room or school can commune with me,
> But roughs and little children better than they.

> The young mechanic is closest to me, he knows me well,
> The woodman that takes his axe and jug with him shall take me with him all day," etc.

Plain, practical, prosaic taste, not to be cavilled at; every man has full freedom to take from the world what he best likes. The protest is merely this,—not to call talking singing. To see all things, near and far, high and low, good and bad, is the natural bent of a thoughtful mind. To talk about or write about them is fitting, laudable, the best indeed that such a mind can do.

But whatever is done or undone in this busy, whirling, mad world, let us each in his sphere, with his strength, try to keep the law of congruity: music from the musician for the music-loving man or woman; art from the artist for the art-loving, art-appreciating soul; intellect—its laws, capacities, products—for the intellectual, for men and women born to think, trained to think, glad and happy to think.

Of this divine law of congruity Walt Whitman has no conception. Indeed, he is the best personification of the incongruous that contemporary literature has to offer. Life-pictures he gives and delights in giving. He is untiring in gazing, in acting, overflowing with the vitality that uses every atom of dust, every leaf of foliage, every beauty,

every blot in mankind. Common things, ugly, crawling, repulsive things, low, corrupted, hideous things,—these are taken in and welcomed by his mind as heartily as if they were things beautiful, things poetic.

From "Song of Myself" take another sample at random:

"The blab of the pave, tires of carts, sluff of boot-soles, talk of the promenaders,
The heavy omnibus, the driver with his interrogating thumb, the clank of the shod horses on the granite floor."

"The butcher-boy puts off his killing-clothes, or sharpens his knife at the stall in the market.
I loiter, enjoying his repartee and his shuffle and breakdown."

Is this poetic? is this poetry? If so, what is prose? Or take lines from the "Song of the Open Road:"

"Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,
It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth."

There can be no objection, certainly, to a man's holding this creed of the savage, to his both holding and expressing it. But to call such lines poetry is to misname, to stultify, to work confusion most grievous. Again, in the same "Song of the Open

Road" we find this most unwise, unsound, as well as unpoetic analysis of wisdom:

"Here is the test of wisdom:
Wisdom is not finally tested in schools.
Wisdom cannot be pass'd from one having it to another not having it.
Wisdom is of the soul, is not susceptible of proof, is its own proof,
Applies to all stages and objects and qualities and is content,
Is the certainty of the reality and immortality of things, and the excellence of things;
Something there is in the float of the sight of things that provokes it out of the soul."

Could words be more untrue?

POETRY IS NOT DEAD.*

JULIAN HAWTHORNE says, "A man who gives himself up to poetry nowadays is regarded by the average sense of the community as unpractical and a little absurd. Religion and poetry are in the highest sense identical, and the Bible is the great poem of all time. Is it because religion has become a mere thing of forms and traditions and 'livings' and church steeples and impotent resentment against Darwinism, that poetry is losing honor and influence?" †

Belief in the genius of Julian Hawthorne does not imply agreement with all he says. For instance, nothing that he and all the critics of England and America combined could say would make me believe that "poetry is losing honor and influence." Why should poetry be in this unhappy plight? Can beauty ever die out? Can the grace and charm of intellectual life ever grow old, de-

* Written in 1888.

† The American Magazine, April, 1888.

crepit, hideous? Not so. All the world agees that beauty of person and beauty of soul are alike immortal. One beautiful woman dies, many beautiful women die. Beauty never dies. So with poetry. One poet dies, many poets die. Poetry itself is perpetual. In every age there have been poets: ours is no exception. Yet all people cannot recognize poets. Men and women living in the world driven by its hard logic of ways and means can hardly be expected to see any poetry in life. Nevertheless it exists, just as romance exists, possibly close to the cynical observer's fireside.

Nothing is so difficult as to make people believe in what they cannot understand. The musician has his own world. The artist has another kind. The inventor has still another. The society woman has hers. The domestic wife and mother clings to hers as the best. The philanthropist, or the devotee, —in or out of convent,—has still another kind. All men and women of any force, of any capacity whatsoever, cling to what they are now doing or wish to do as the best of life. And such doing is the best.

Poetry can no more lose ground than beauty or music can lose their influence. A born poetic character—man or woman—is poetic to the end. While saying this and believing it devoutly, I do

not forget the hardness of life for poets and poetic people.

Poetry, like painting, is judged according to the mind that is appointed—by self or others—to criticise. A new volume of poems is given to a critic, whether of newspaper or of magazine. It makes or does not make any particular impression. Yet something of decided opinion must be given. A very prosaic mind even may be called upon to express poetic opinions.

Poets and poetry live to-day as they have ever lived, as they will live on forever. If you think you have an inkling as to their meaning, treasure it as a something better than a costly house or a sparkling jewel. Above all, see to it that you keep that inkling intact, free from the rust of disuse, from the affectations of sentiment and passion, from the shams of conventional life. The faculty of seeing beauty is usually coexistent with a passionate heart. It is the key to the artist-poet nature. You see it in the highest types of actor, of musician, of artist, of writer of fiction and of poetry. To know what poetry is you need not be a poet. But your mind must possess a poetic vein.

EGYPT AND THE DESERT.

ORIENTAL roving,—who takes a warm interest in this? Assuredly not the busy, planning, driving people who believe material existence the sole incentive to activity and the best reward of perseverance. They would deny point-blank that the water of the Nile could be different from that of any other river; would hold ancient temples and palaces as so many worthless masses of stone, hieroglyphics as far less interesting than the daily newspaper; would deem two or three months of boat-life either an unpardonable waste of time or drearily tedious.

Or, of the Desert,—what would be their version? Probably, a series of discomforts and privations from beginning to end. They would tell of the miseries of camel-riding; of the annoyances of tent-life; of the extortions and treachery of the Arabs; of the sufferings incident to blazing suns, hot south winds, fierce-driving sand-storms; of frequent risks from robbers or assassins.

Yet to some other people—as a test, say those

who once could, nay, who even now can, lose themselves in "The Thousand and One Nights"—there is a peculiar fascination in the bare thought of the Orient. If you are one of that kind, you hail as a rich and dearly-prized privilege the opportunity of making the thought a reality. A natural reverence for antiquity makes you enthusiastic in anticipation; you ascend the Nile not for amusement but as if on a pilgrimage to that deeply-interesting yet always solemn region called Past Ages. Your stages of travel are slow and gradual enough to prepare your mind for its new acquisitions.

You sail up the Nile in a dahabieh, and during some days find ample occupation in the semi-domestic drama enacted by the crew of Egyptians and Nubians, the Maltese dragoman and servants, and your own party. First of all, the narrow space —the condensed comfort and discomfort—of your quarters, and the domestic routine, so to speak, of the journey. For, what with the meals, reading, and studying, and the running out upon deck to see the river sights,—the crocodiles, birds, "sakias" and "shadoofs," the palm-trees, villages, and fellahs on the shore,—the days pass with exceeding rapidity.

And then the evenings on the Nile,—these alone stand out as special epochs of subdued delight.

Can there be in any other land such deep flame-colored sunsets,—sunsets followed by that wondrous after-glow which neither pen nor canvas can portray, which must be seen and felt to be understood? Never, perhaps, in any part of the Orient, can you have so absolute a realization of Eastern atmosphere as when sitting dreamily in that after-glow. You linger in it until the last instant, you part with it in the hope of witnessing another and another.

Then there are sudden squalls, at times rending the sails and threatening to capsize the boat, frequent running aground, and, when there is no wind to fill the sails, the curious process "tracking." Seeing the crew walking along the shore Indian-file dragging the boat up-stream by a rope, you begin to think your progress is to be a slow and laborious matter. Then come squabbles and ridiculous contentions among the crew and servants, detentions for the baking of bread and buying of provisions. Least endurable of all the annoyances is the concert of horrible discord performed nightly by some of the crew; one plays on a kind of pipe, others beat drums, while the rest sing and clap their hands in chorus,—altogether a savage monotony of noise distracting in quality, seemingly endless in quantity.

At last, after many days and nights of alternate sailing, "tracking," and "poling," the First Cataract is reached. Then follows the usual excursion into Nubia, to see Philæ—the Holy Island—and those few miles of scenery beyond which make you desire to go on to the Second Cataract. But the Nile is to be descended and all the wonders of its banks explored. And doing this you see that for which no reading, no imagining, had fully prepared you. Day by day you wander through ruins of temples and temple-palaces, measure with eye and mind those proportions which only the closest observation and oft-repeated visits can even partially realize. Never before have you had any conception of height, of breadth, of massiveness, of colossal grandeur. With mingled curiosity and awe you ponder over those pictured walls setting forth the religious beliefs and rites, the arts of building, the war-adventures and triumphs, every phase of out-door and in-door life as lived in remote eras of history. And in those weird tombs you see the individual lives of the owners represented with a detail and an accuracy which stamp upon your mind ineffaceably the close kinship of humanity however great the interval between their lives. There are men, women, and children in their work, in their amusements, in their joy, in their

suffering, in all the scenes between life and death. Even beyond this the pictures go,—just as mortals of this era go,—representing confidently and definitely the hereafter according to the popular faith of the country.

In short, history—of the very earliest epochs—is here brought before your eyes as pictures are shown to children. Whatever your actual condition of mind, you are forced into learning much, into thinking and believing still more. And mingled with the wonders of ancient times are the ugly facts of modern Egypt,—the oppression, ignorance, poverty, squalor of its population. The Past and the Present are here indeed difficult to reconcile. Upon the whole, as a rover—not as a philosopher—you do not feel bound to reconcile such incongruities, but simply give yourself full liberty to look, to study, to be impressed, to dream. That every day's journey adds to your life-store of thought and feeling, that every new grain of that acquisition awakens a deeper interest in things heard of or imagined yet buried under the mighty sands you tread,—of this you are sure. What if, looking back through an intervening vista of years, those days appear hardly more real than the child's reading of Eastern tales? Is not all "looking back" a seeming unreality? Can yesterday or

last week be touched save in thought and in feeling?

The descent of the Nile accomplished, you visit the Great Pyramids, which, strange to say, appear to decrease in size as you approach; but once at the base, their magnitude makes itself duly felt. What a mob of Arabs here, all wishing to be engaged as guides! Selection being made, you and your party begin the ascent of those huge stones; but your guides give your arms such tremendous jerks at every step that you soon dispense with their rude aid, and prefer clambering up alone, although you find it a feat testing well the quality of lungs and muscles. A brief repose enables you to take in the fine prospect from the summit, and then comes the descent,—a process more enjoyable than the other. You do not grow dizzy, so you jump down three or four steps and then sit down to feast your eyes upon the view, the brilliant sky, and the unique appearance of the Pyramid itself with its dazzling rows of steps. At the base you partake of a substantial luncheon, and then explore the interior of the Pyramid, a performance by no means agreeable either at the time or in recollection. Each member of the party has a guide, and each guide a lighted candle. You take the arm of your dusky, wild-looking cavalier, and enter through a small

opening into a low, narrow, descending passage paved with marble so highly polished that it is well-nigh impossible to keep a foothold. You grope through several corridors of this kind before coming to a larger one where there is a steep ascent on a very slippery inclined plane, with grooves for a foothold every three or four feet. Here you must perforce put your arms around your Arab escort, and even then feel by no means safe, for on one side seems to be an ugly precipice; besides this, the air is stiflingly close, and there are immense quantities of sand and fine dust which choke you,—producing altogether sensations of mingled awe and disgust. At last the King's Chamber, the Queen's Chamber, and other rooms are reached,—then the winding passages again, then, best of all, the daylight and the fresh air once more. You think it very solemn, but very oppressive; you are glad to have been in there, but you do not want to go a second time.

Days in Cairo preparatory to crossing the Desert, —these present novel and entertaining incidents. What human activity, partly European, partly Asiatic, is here in the streets and suburbs! What crowds of clamorous donkey-boys, with their knowing-looking, easy-gaited, tiny brutes, which they push up amid deafening shouts and reckless scuf-

fling to the first stranger who presents himself in the door-way! At first you think somebody is being mobbed, but after a few days' acquaintance with modern Egyptians and Arabs you find that nothing can be done without this screaming and hubbub. What picturesque scenes, in which mosques and minarets, bazaars, camels, Arab horses with gayly-attired riders, people of various nationalities and tribes, burning sun, clouds of dust, shady groves, and cool breezes are oddly mingled! If a youthful traveller,—especially if a woman,—you go with your party, see what they see, do as they tell you to do. But in addition to this there is another pleasure that falls to you,—your own way of seeing and deducing things, of taking mental sketches, one which perhaps only years later brings forth fruit. At the time—and this applies as well to a later period, when you visit other famous cities of the Orient—all that you clearly know is this: you are sojourning in that Orient of which as a child you drank in such long, deep draughts of allegory, romance, and poetry. This you never lose sight of, spite of all the discomfort and fatigue inseparable from Oriental travel.

The Desert offers another phase of the Orient which no one possessing the true spirit of roving

would willingly miss. Granted that the forty days between Cairo and Jerusalem necessitate certain severe privations and some real anxieties, yet may we not well include those for the sake of the other side,—the great gain of new ideas and many hours of pleasure? Surely it is something to have ridden on camels through many long days and some still longer nights! Not that the camel is interesting as an animal. From the very first acquaintance with him—a trial ride in Cairo—up to the parting in Hebron, he seemed to you the very incarnation of impatience, surliness, and ugly snarling. Eight out of the nine travellers in your party were ready, you think, to agree with Harriet Martineau when she says, "The mingled expression of spite, fear, and hopelessness in the face of the camel always gave me the impression of its being, or feeling itself, a *damned* animal. I wonder some of the old painters of hell did not put a camel into their foreground, and make a traditional emblem of it." Indeed, recalling your own sensations during that same Desert journey, you pronounce it the most trying and exhausting mode of travel ever attempted. The uncouth jerking motion when rising or kneeling down for the rider to mount or dismount is a process requiring some moments of mental bracing before submit-

ting to it. Then their regular swaying, swinging strides continued through many consecutive hours produce a seeming dislocation both of bones and of nerves. Yet, once started upon this desert journey, there is no escaping the dromedary's back for the greater part of the day; for only the Bedouins or those inured to their life could keep up with the camel's stride. When towards evening you are permitted to dismount and walk, it seems a complete and blissful restoration to the poor, jerked-about, harassed body.

Nor can any one who has traversed the Desert forget the blazing suns and glaring sands of many of the days; and worse, far worse, is the burning south wind, which often blows three successive days. Imagine the whole caravan moving off about six of a fine, cool April morning (which "moving," by the way, is not done without a vast amount of running about and vociferating on the part of the Bedouins and European servants as they take down and roll up tents, and gather up beds, mattresses, pillows, tables, camp-stools, etc., to be packed away on the camels' backs until the next camping-place is reached in the evening), then imagine about nine a breeze as if from an oven begininng to blow, and growing stronger and hotter every hour until your face is literally baked,

your lips and mouth painfully parched. Added to this, occasionally, is a persistent sand-drizzle, an atmosphere of fine sand to breathe instead of air, a sand which penetrates everything on you and around you, even to the piece of bread or biscuit you take for your luncheon.

Thirst—excessive, incessant, unquenchable thirst—is another painful recollection of the Desert. True, your supplies are supposed to be ample, and at intervals you come to oases where clear, fresh springs replenish your barrels and skins; but even this does not prevent an ever-present actual thirst, or a continual recollection and anticipation of its cravings. At times it seems as if neither tea nor wine nor water could allay the sensation. You look with longing eyes at the barrels of water on the baggage-camels; water, water. is never absent from your thoughts; even the absolutely muddy water which some days is the only kind to be had, you hold as a rare treat. And at such times, when even this supply is known to be diminishing, with what expectant anxiety all await the return of the Arab who has been despatched on one of the fleetest dromedaries of the caravan in search of springs! This thirst,—excessive and incessant,—was there nothing to assuage it? Yes, one thing there was, a nectar pure and cool and vivifying,

but one, alas, of which there was never enough for the panting mortals who craved it. Often before had I tested its luscious properties, absorbing pleasure and calmness with every drop of the precious fluid. Delicate, amber-colored nectar! I see it before me now with its countless golden globules reflecting the light, a beverage at once odorous and tempting, and with eye drinking in the beauty of the liquid, and nostril inhaling the spicy perfume, taste is at last appealed to,—the climax reached. Sensuous delight of the most rare yet harmless kind fills the being,—in a single instant all hunger, thirst, and fatigue vanish. Seldom, indeed, can the senses of man be indulged without a bitter residue of regret, satiety, or inebriety! Would you know the name of this nectar which may well bear comparison with the mythical drink of a by-gone age? If so, ask for the orange, —not that acid, tough-fibred, half-dried thing too often called by that name, but the full-ripe, full-flavored orange of tropical climes.

Then, too, I recall days at Akaba on the Red Sea, —days of bargaining with the Bedouins for dromedaries and escorts to go to Petra. Here it is demonstrated very plainly that greed for gold is by no means a quality peculiar to the European

race. In fact, these wandering Arabs, with apparently so little need for money, seem animated by the self-same spirit that prompts men in all other parts of the world to take all they can get. But in this case even gold will not avail in furthering the wishes of you and your party. For, after eight days' encampment at Akaba and endless palavering and quarrelling, Petra must be abandoned, because the Sheik who was to serve as your escort is at war with the tribes there.

Then, too, come days and nights of risk,—liability of attack from tribes of Bedouins hostile to those acting as our escort. The travellers are cautioned to keep their dromedaries together as much as possible, the gentlemen to keep their fire-arms ready for use. Yet, through some natural perversity of the dromedaries and the baggage-camels, these days are just the ones when they seem most inclined to straggle, to stop, to nibble the shrubbery, and to be in every way unruly.

These days of risk were greatest in going from Damascus to Palmyra, a journey deemed somewhat adventurous at that date. To the latest day of existence you will never forget one sensation endured,—that of sleepiness, overpoweringly painful sleepiness, while travelling by night on the camel. There were moments—many of them—when you

did nod, nod, nod, while the animal strode, strode, swayed, swayed; but to sleep would have been certain breaking of your neck. Fear of this alone enabled you to bear the torture.

Yet, all in all, the privations and risks of the Desert are fully counterbalanced by the actual enjoyment mingling with them and the rich harvest of memories added to life.

The pleasures of the Desert would make a long list if drawn up by a rover capable of seeing and profiting by the whole. Perhaps nowhere do we find greater surprises as regards air, scenery, and effects. If there are days of scorching heat and driving sand, there are also days of deliciously cool and bracing temperature. Indeed, the extraordinary purity of the atmosphere is a continual subject of wonder; so, too, are the clouds and showers and sudden gales which vary the anticipated monotony of the Desert.

And the scenery,—what more varied and picturesque than those wild, narrow defiles of the silent, mysterious mountain-ranges!—rugged, steep mountains, some portions rising to sharp, fanciful peaks of every size, resembling in outline Moorish architecture as seen in the honeycomb stalactites of the Alhambra, and all of the most

varied and brilliant colors. The rocks and stones on the road are likewise vividly tinted, and appear as if washed by the waves. Interest and wonder are constantly in play here in these rocky defiles, yet there is a weirdness about them, and a heated air enclosed as it were without chance of escape, which would make encampment there even for one day or one night insufferable. A sense of glad relief accompanies the exit, and a positive rejoicing ensues upon reaching one of those fragments of Paradise called oases. Who that has passed over this desert region does not preserve vivid recollections of that model oasis, Wady Teiran! where there are luxuriant palms, delicate acacias, grasses in the rock-clefts, and above all a deliciously cool, clear stream running through the centre, and inviting us to drink, drink long draughts of the crystal beverage we never before so dearly valued. Only for one night is the halt in this lovely spot, where so much rest, so much enjoyment, are condensed into that brief space. The Arabs make the encampment, then kindle a brilliant fire, and seat themselves on the ground around it with their never-failing pipes. The travellers avail themselves of such meagre comforts as saddle-bags afford, revel in plenty of

water, and take in the full beauty of the spot until fatigue drives them to their couches.

The Desert crossed, and quarantine passed at Hebron, another and wholly different phase of the Orient begins. Dromedaries are exchanged for horses, and, while tents are still retained, they alternate with convents and semi-European, semi-Asiatic inns. A summer passed in Palestine and Syria implies a series of visits to historical—real and traditional—places; a roving over and dwelling upon the mountains of Lebanon; intercourse with many people of various nationalities, tribes, and religions. Scenes of exquisite natural beauty alternate with scenes of grossest superstition; places sacred to Christendom are disgraced by the shameful squabbles of so-called Christians; peaceful valleys are stained with fierce battles of Arab tribes. In variety of actual fact and incident, in association and historical interest, no other country offers stronger attractions to the rover of imaginative tendencies.

VERBOEKHOVEN AND HIS STUDIO.*

Out the Chaussée de Haecht, one of the principal streets of Brussels, where a great many artists live, is a house bearing upon its door-plate the name Eugène Verboekhoven. There is a gate-way and a wall enclosing a fine shady garden, with trees and grass. Back of this stands the house itself, which has more the appearance of a villa than of a town house. Upon approaching the front door you may be saluted, as we were, by a chorus of dogs' voices coming from the right, the animals, fortunately for timid persons, being chained. To the ring at the bell a young girl with pleasing manner answers, and, being properly accredited visitors, we are at once shown to the studio. M. Verboekhoven himself opens its door; we are presented in due form, and are invited in. A short, elderly man with spectacles and rather reddish face, dressed in gray, brush and palette in hand, bows, and almost instantly reseats himself and

* Written in 1867.

begins to paint. He is hard at work upon a medium-sized picture—a group of sheep. A slight sense of surprise comes over us at the abruptness of his manner, but this feeling instantly vanishes. We can but admire his enthusiasm. Almost every day the poor famous man is interrupted in this way.

After a few seconds, during which we are busy in taking a general view of the place, M. Verboekhoven, without even turning round, remarks that he hopes his visitors will excuse him for keeping on with his work. Whereupon we, of course, reply that every one knows well how valuable his moments must be, and so on.

The first sensation upon entering the studio is that of delicious coolness. The apartment is a large, lofty, square room, lighted from the roof, with two doors, one where you enter and one opposite leading to the goat- and sheep-stables, where the models are kept. To be in such a room is like experiencing a cool, fresh bath after the heat and glare of the outside world upon a hot August day.

How, you think, he must enjoy working in an atmosphere so ideal in every sense as this! The walls from top to bottom are covered with pictures and sketches of all sorts,—all by his own hand,—

heads, figures, animals, but mostly the last. There is also a fine plaster cast of a tigress and her cubs, life-size. In another room, just across the passage, precisely the same in size and appearance as the one we are in, are more pictures and casts, every inch of available space being covered. These two rooms composing the studio are attached to the dwelling, and were evidently built for the special purpose to which they have been put. In the second room, besides innumerable pictures and studies of all sorts, are two very large paintings, —one occupying the centre of the left side— Rubens on horseback, life-size, and a landscape with animals,—both superb pictures.

Some moments after we enter the second room, to our surprise, the great artist comes in, without his brush, and begins to converse pleasantly. At first we naturally hesitate about entering into conversation, thinking it might detain or embarrass him, but, finding that he really is inclined to play the host, we gladly enough turn our attention from the works to the man. He speaks in French; he understands a little English, he says, but has no time to study it.

I speak of certain paintings of his which we have seen in America, and of his reputation for marvellous swiftness. "Ah," he replies, "I have

no greater facility than others for rapid painting. I accomplish more because I work more. Every morning at five I am at work, and from that till dusk. Where others give six hours I give twelve, —that is the only difference." "Yes, I have worked hard," he repeats several times during the conversation, but not as if attributing any merit to himself. He states it in a simple, grave manner as a fact, just as one might say it of another.

Sculpture he has always admired more, and taken more delight in it, than painting. His father was a sculptor, and he himself had been one at the outset. Even now he spends much time with the clay during winter evenings. In this room are several more casts,—a very fine lion and a Venus, which, we were subsequently told, the artist uncovers only for specially favored visitors. I could not help expressing surprise that he should not have chosen sculpture rather than painting, considering that he took more pleasure in it, and that he regarded it as a higher art. His reply was that it had been necessary to work for an existence, and that he had made his reputation by his paintings; there was time for the one branch only, and he had chosen the one that gave him bread and butter.

Had he done anything in marble? we question. "Yes, a bust of myself," he replies, and he will show it to us, with pleasure. It is in his dwelling, but in a very poor place, where the light does not fall upon it properly.

But before leaving this room he shows us some studies of heads—sheep's, lambs', goats'—in every variety of position. He explains how plainly nationality is stamped upon the faces, and how different each face is,—precisely as much difference as in human countenances. With him it requires but one glance to distinguish the Scotch, English, or Flemish animal. "Ah," says he, "you have no idea how much work there is in all these studies; again and again they must be made and remade until the right expression and position are caught." There is that in his voice which speaks of many weary hours of toil and patience,—hours concerning which none but himself knows. Apparently M. Verboekhoven is between sixty and seventy years old, but, notwithstanding his unusual application, he enjoys good health. The only sign of feebleness one notices appears in his voice. Between sixty and sixty-two he was quite blind for eighteen months. Of this sad period, however, he does not speak.

Our visit terminates with the view of the bust

up-stairs in his private parlor. To get up there one must go through the studio again and into the sheep-stable, where he introduces to us two splendid Scotch specimens,—"wild fellows," he says, "just arrived." Here, too, are several little lambs, white and gentle. Then we pass along a corridor filled with paintings and up a flight of stairs. The bust of himself is fine as a work of art, and the marble is perfect, but as a likeness it appears flattered. But from the transparency and purity of marble do not almost all statues seem so? Besides, Verboekhoven's face is not only reddish but also pockmarked, though not badly. Neither of these blemishes appears in the marble. But the fact is that Verboekhoven, like the true artist that he is, idealizes, beautifies.

FAVORITE FLOWERS.*

CAN we tell why our favorite flowers speak to us as they do? Were reason or botany the arbiter, it would not be easy to point to one flower among thousands—in woods or in garden—and say, Behold my favorite! Luckily, individual liking is far more potent than science. By the verdict of that liking we exclaim, Give me the rose and I am content! Let me inhale the breath of the woodbine and I crave none of Lubin's extracts! Send me a spray of trailing arbutus and the memory of it lasts all through the summer!

Why do people ramble through a garden in search of a particular rose? of a spicy carnation? of the tiny, bell-shaped, exquisitely-fragrant Mahernia? We need but few flowers to satisfy us, but these must meet our tastes. However simple, unlearned, or strange these are to others, to ourselves they yield ever-fresh delight. Why feel ashamed of even the lowliest predilections? Better, indeed, try to keep them intact as at least one proof

* Written in 1870.

of individuality. Let every one enjoy flowers his own way. I ask for one only of my favorites at a time, the pleasure being thus concentrated. Many forms, colors, and odors distract my faculties, scatter my affection.

Did you ever see a large crêpe myrtle in full bloom? I wish you could see one now before me that has just reached perfection. What a ravishing sight is that mass of pink blossoms in the dazzling sunlight! I can see it from my window, at a distance, but standing beside it, as I did a few minutes ago, the perfect beauty of it burst upon me like a revelation. Had I not been so well drilled a mortal I could have stood entranced. As it was, things material pressed upon the æsthetic sense, and while breaking off a small sprig there was the felt necessity of absorbing much in a brief space. Are not all the choicest gifts of the same fleeting nature, warning us even in the hour of enjoyment that there can be no permanency? A look, a word, a smile, a pressure of the hand,—have not these simple acts, when charged with sentiment, procured for us some of the dearest moments of existence? Yet what could be more evanescent, less tangible? Here for a few brief seconds sense and soul are filled by these lovely flowers. I may not see them again, but the remembrance is last-

ing. I rejoice at having seen them, at having been stirred by their beauty and fragrance. It is the same with all that life has given and will continue to give.

What singular beauty in a single leaf of this myrtle! Suspended each from its own special point, the cluster is a marvel of transparency, delicate tints, careless grace. No wonder the ancients dedicated this flower to Venus! Fitting emblem of a sentiment which defies both discipline and analysis. Farewell, sweet myrtle! Bloom yet a few days to charm other eyes and hearts, and then fade away, like other fragrant blossoms immortalized in memory.

Bouquets! If of conventional type they give me more pain than pleasure. The flowers are torn from their native element of beauty and subjected to rude mechanism. They are wired, bandaged, yoked to sticks, forced to yield their sweetness to cold Fashion's behest. They cause me discomfort similar to that felt in a crowded room. The people are all good of their kind, whether useful, handsome, witty, or graceful. All are worthy of respect, some are to be admired, a few loved for their own sake. Yet a mixed assemblage brings unpleasantly close a juxtaposition of voices, manners, garments, attitudes, all so interblended that personal

identity is lost. The eye sees many forms, the ear hears many confused tones, there is a general grimacing and gesticulation, with the result that for the time being individual beauty and strength are invisible.

Bouquets, indeed! Think of lowly violets walled in by self-asserting geraniums! Of the aristocratic rose associated with the plebeian dahlia! Of the aromatic carnation consorted with the scentless, flaccid petunia! Of dainty heliotrope and gaudy tulip side by side! Of drooping lily-of-the-valley face to face with stately hyacinth! Of sturdy spruce or arbor-vitæ enclosing the peerless camellia! Of delicate daphne overpowered by tuberose! It is, perhaps, less shocking to see a number of kinds together, a gay miscellany of form and color, than strong contrasts. But even this is merely a result of taste vitiated by custom. The incongruity itself is not one whit less annoying.

Bouquets! Whether festive, domestic, or funereal, the flowers composing them are so distorted from their natural selves that they affect me painfully. Their odors are so intermingled that the potency of each is impaired. I lose all sense of pleasure, and am only unpleasantly affected by the mélange. Let every one choose his own flowers,

and deal with them as he will. I shall not interfere with others if they cherish the hydrangea, the althea, the sunflower, nor remonstrate if they ask for fifty varieties compressed into a plateau, twisted into a crown, or built into a pyramid. Only, dear friend, whoever you may be, do not think me insensible to divine beauty if I refuse to admire those mechanisms. Let me stipulate for my favorite flowers, to be enjoyed in my own way. Through the senses, through the intellect, through the soul, let me absorb their delicious fragrance and beauty, intoxicated with their potency. Even if there are moments when I pass them with seeming indifference,—as I might pass a lovely child or not notice the glory of a sunset,—it does not mean that love has waxed cold, but that the expression of it is held in abeyance by some other interest. Can we, indeed, in a world proffering so bewildering an array of attractions, both to sense and to thought, be at all times impartial in our treatment of the beautiful?

WOMEN WAGE-EARNERS.

WHERE are the schools that teach girls first of all things the principles of self-support? They certainly are needed in a community. Thousands of young and even old women to-day are suffering because of the lack in early youth of instruction of this kind. If such schools do not exist, we may be sure education so called is not the great good that it pretends to be. It is not the boon it should be. Take the young woman, for example, who has been graduated from our public schools with highest honors. Is she well equipped, as she should be, to battle with the world, to be a wage-earner, if need be, in woman's natural sphere? Verily not. She has, we may grant, an education so called, but not the kind that will benefit her the most for the domestic life she is sooner or later in all probability to enter upon. Young girls are rarely taught any handicraft in schools. They should be instructed in some trade, in some form of manual work, or at least in housekeeping in one or more of its several branches.

To-day or to-morrow our daughters may be forced through circumstances to become wage-earners. Through disaster they may be stripped of their fortunes, be they big or little. Let each woman ask herself, while there is still perhaps time, What could I do to earn a living? What am I fitted for by my training? Education, whether in public or private schools or in homes, should first of all inculcate the idea and point to the child the power and the means of self-support. This should be the first and most important desideratum, and should be regarded as an essential part of all education.

This doctrine means a radical change in the present plan of education, exclaim a host of teachers! Yes, undoubtedly, but the principle at stake is worthy of the change, however radical it may at first seem. All will admit that the present mode of education as an end to self-support is for the majority a sad failure. Witness the thousands of young women daily seeking employment unsuccessfully in the spheres for which they have had no special or thorough training.

Ignorance begets helplessness. Many women, being ignorant of any special trade or work, knowing how to do no one thing even moderately

well, howsoever humble the task may be, founder in their helplessness, appealing to friends and the public to save them, to help them. Without thorough knowledge on some practical subject, not much can be done to give them the assistance they crave.

Such a one applies to us for help, saying, "I need money; what do you advise me to do?"

"What do you know how to do?"

"I have had the usual school education, and since 'finishing' I have been assisting at home."

"Do you like house occupation? is there any one part in the household management in which you take interest or pride?"

"No; it seems great drudgery, a weary routine that leaves me depressed and helpless."

"Outside of domestic affairs, then, what are your accomplishments?"

"I like teaching, I like nursing, I should like to study medicine,—but I cannot leave home now; my father is in feeble health. Can you not suggest some means whereby I may earn a comfortable living at home?"

Ah! poor, pitiable woman, no longer young, without a single accomplishment, unable to perform any office in the eyes of the world worthy of special compensation, your case, like that of thou-

sands, is nigh helpless. You have had no education to fit you to be a wage-earner; you are proficient in absolutely nothing for which the world is ready to pay you wages. The world does not want your services, such as they are, because you are in no way qualified. The fault, however, is not in you, but in the kind of education that you have had.

The clue to the vexed question as to how the average woman shall earn wages is to be found in the two familiar words, Domestic Service. This is the most interesting and by far the most important phase of the whole subject. That kind of wage-earning is not merely open to all, but it is the working-woman's most natural sphere. It is her most healthful, useful, and profitable field of work. Thoroughly understood, it is the best qualification she can have for her highest possible social position,—marriage. She begins at the lowest rung of the domestic ladder,—housework. She has every opportunity to rise in the world. Understanding the best way of keeping a house clean, neat, attractive, she becomes qualified for the next step onward, to choose the kind of housework she prefers or is best fitted for, whether this be cooking, chamberwork, or sewing.

The English term "upper" parlor maid signifies what we in the United States ought to recognize in house-service,—namely, advancement in wages and respect in proportion to skill, trustworthiness, good manners. Such advancement leads naturally to the one post most seriously needed in American homes of the wealthy,—the housekeeper. A large house with many servants is as much in need of a housekeeper, other than the mistress, as a factory is of a superintendent. That this post is so rarely filled in private houses in this country accounts for a well-known deplorable fact: the excessive "wear and tear" of the mistress. The losses from this are physical prostration, mental deterioration, gradual decline of grace and beauty.

In cases of a medium household, comfortable without wealth, the German custom of engaging a young lady who superintends the household, under the mistress, is good. This custom, for a small family or one of moderate wealth, might readily be adopted in America. Immense benefits would accrue directly to two people,—the mistress and the assistant,—and indirectly to the family and to the friends. It is not fair treatment that the mistress of a household should be required to spend her strength and time over details that a young assistant could attend to with profit

to both her character and pocket. Many good, well-educated American women married say at twenty are thoroughly "worn out," therefore unattractive, at forty, simply through the excess of household details. This is injustice to the woman and to her family and friends. The problem of domestic service is so interwoven with happy home life that it calls for the most serious attention on the part of social thinkers. The woman who does her best to develop this question is of the greatest positive value in her day to society.

It is not necessary here to touch upon exceptional women; the artists, the students, the actresses, and the like,—women endowed with special gifts that stamp their career. Exceptional women, like exceptional men, need no hints, no social legislation. They can always command both position and wages. Like the exceptional women in society or art, their sphere is decided by birthright or rare gifts. But it is the non-exceptional, the good, willing woman who has no special gifts and is not taught any one useful occupation, who needs help. Domestic economy is the all-important study that Americans of both sexes are called upon to cultivate.

DRUNKENNESS A CRIME.

Crime is the same whether in a savage or in a Christian, in one sex or in the other. Among savages there are many distinctions as to cruel or ferocious disposition. One out of three is more kind or more brutal than the others. Among civilized people it is precisely the same. There are always the criminals and those capable of becoming criminals. The tendencies to cruelty are incipient crimes. Those tendencies either exist in certain persons at birth, are inherited, or are grafted upon the individual through vicious associations. Both are potent, but especially the former.

"When I assert that vices are inseparable from great and potent societies, and that it is impossible that wealth and grandeur should subsist without them, I do not say that the particular members of them who are guilty of any should not be continually reproved, or not be punished for them when they grow into crimes." So wrote De Mandeville, and the two facts of the paragraph will doubtless

hold good as long as the human race exists. Crime is as much a part of mankind as virtue is a part: restraint and punishment should follow as an essential means of defence for the favored—but not perhaps more virtuous—mortals who are not criminals.

Crime is the same whether in Paris, in London, or in New York. If the foreign street Arab seem worse, it is only because he is more intelligent. Given the criminal propensity, the more brain the blacker the crime; the same force of character—alias brain—the greater the invention, the daring, the crime.

Inherited tendencies are the same in one country as in another. In England, in America, young criminals of every grade are to be found. What is civilization doing to-day to ameliorate or exterminate crime? The criminal classes here are formidable, especially so when the newness of the country and its extraordinary prosperity are considered. Is there even an attempt made to punish the drunkard? Is he taken away from home, prevented from continuing the course of ruin? Are the children of drunken parents removed and cared for by town or state? The number of men in liquor—young and vigorous men—one meets every day coming out of saloons, on our thoroughfares,—and this

at high noon,—shocks, repels, and saddens one. These young, strong, well-dressed men are the fathers of the school-children we are spending millions upon. Yet the example of such young men—with bleared eyes, bloated faces, brutal propensities—must inevitably counteract all that the best schools can do. No, civilization has done nothing to prevent crime of this kind. Nothing will be accomplished until it makes drunkenness, if not a crime, at least a disgrace.

Years and years ago I became convinced that no kind of so-called charity could ever be of lasting good until drunkenness should be treated as a crime. Of what use to have charitable institutions for every sort of human ill, so long as the root of suffering is left to spread its poisonous branches all through social life? But let drunkenness be punished with heavy fines, with imprisonment with enforced labor, and presently you will make men see that they cannot continue with impunity to be human fiends, wife- and children-starvers, wife- and children-tormentors, wife- and children-murderers. There is no other possible way to treat drunkenness. Men and women who cannot control their appetite for drink must be controlled by the state or civic law. They must be punished for their crimes of excess and brutality.

The fight against an inherited taste seems endless, hopeless. How many years have you—you who have inherited this tendency to crime—been in the fight? Since the beginning of life itself, possibly, although all through early years and middle life you did not know the incubus that weighed upon aim and endeavor,—ay, upon conscience itself. You are drawn, dragged, driven from your goal by the awful forces of circumstance,—the cross-purposes of heredity added to your little social world.

Soul-sore, indeed! Oh, the climbing, climbing up to the peak your mind's eye discerned long years ago! There, far up, countless leagues away from your actual foothold, is the goal that at the start seemed so easy to reach. Joyously you set off, confidently you went on and on, never for an instant losing faith in your inner conviction; yet where are you now? Soul-sore, sick and faint from the struggle with the world-forces you learned to recognize all too late. Had you at starting in that heyday of youth been told of the trials and obstacles on the way, what a different career would have been yours!

HAPPINESS OR UNHAPPINESS.

If required to answer in one sentence the question, For whom is life not worth living? I should say, For the one who asks this question. And why this reply? The reasons are readily found. Looking at the people about us, we notice few who are disfigured physically, few cripples, few blind, few starving, few who are maltreated. There are, moreover, few who are incapacitated by nature for gaining a living. Then why are there so many suffering, unhappy people, so many who ask, Is life worth living? The answer to this momentous question is to be found in the individual himself; in the very one who makes the query.

Looking into the lowest stratum of society, the men and women in menial positions, we find the same characteristics existing here as in the highest classes. If there is daily faithful work, wages are proportionately given and the worker is content. Doing his best to-day, the morrow is certain to bring him more work and more skill in its execution. No one thus occupied is found to be un-

happy. It is this daily faithful work—whether on the road or in the artist's studio—that makes the contented man. Look on the other side of society, at the eager, craving, ease-loving, pleasure-seeking men and women, and we see without looking far vivid illustrations of unhappiness, and hence of worthless lives.

Among the many causes of what may be termed misery, lack of self-control is especially to be cited. This must include the illnesses, bodily and mental, arising from the use of stimulants and narcotics, from excesses in food and pleasure, from disappointments resulting from vanity and desire for praise, and the like. Misery, in short, may be defined as the fruit of wrong-doing, in which must be distinguished that arising from our own conduct and that resulting from the conduct of others. Poverty, degradation of mind and heart, theft, murder, lust, cruelty exercised by the strong over the weak, and the entire list of human vices and miseries, are, when analyzed, all traceable to natural causes. Over these causes no earthly power can prevail save self-control, the habit and will of the individual. Success or failure, happiness or misery, in life depends largely upon the use we make of this potent factor, control,—the power of intelligence or force over natural tendencies or weaknesses. With

the exercise of self-control men and nations are entitled to respect, but without this power they are weak and unworthy of esteem.

To be unhappy yourself is to make others so. To live under the same roof with an unhappy person is to live in purgatory. To associate with unhappy people, whether in high life or in the working-classes, is to be convinced that such a state of mind is life's greatest curse. Happiness or contentment—whichever name you may choose to give it—is, then, a state of mind. To impress this observation upon the child, upon the man, the woman, is to help people and to give them the clue to a happy life. Life is worth living for him who works faithfully, steadily, unremittingly. Work is the cure for unhappiness. Work is the remedy for every phase of discontent. Work makes life beautiful instead of repulsive. Work brings comfort of body, culture to the intellect, peace to the soul. Work is the paradise of mortal life.

SOME LESSONS OF LIFE.

INTENSITY of thinking and feeling is perhaps, after all, the best that the world can give us,—the best that man can know of the condition we call Life. What person can carry out his plans fully? Who can develop his ideas satisfactorily? Who in any way can express his being as the soul prompts? Must not the noblest endeavor of the noblest man remain far short of the conception?

To live and learn is a dictum trite enough and simple enough, yet an astonishing number of persons seem to find it not only difficult but even impossible. In vain are the grand lessons of life preached to them, and in vain are they disappointed, chagrined, rebuffed, and mortified. They see and hear, are ready enough to criticise others who fall into error, mischief, and folly, but as regards their own affairs they are incorrigible.

Ignorance, negligence, self-indulgence,—what lessons do they not teach us? And yet note how the masses contrive to elude the unpleasant truths and to live on superficially or recklessly. The les-

sons learned from teachers and books have their uses, no doubt, but those which really penetrate, arouse, and excite our being are the practical ones of daily life. These make us feel the humiliating effect of ignorance, the incessant worry consequent upon improvidence, the losses sustained through carelessness, the ruinous effect of intemperance, the certain results of wavering and irresolution. In a word, life with its ten thousand varied phases teaches us all we most need. Lessons come before us daily, adapted to each individual capacity, so that, justly considered, there can be no possible excuse for ignorance or error.

Impartially investigated, the long list of so-called misfortunes would be found to consist largely of indolence, frivolity, extravagance, and ill-regulated passions. And in beholding, as we continually do, the self-indulgence and laxity of principle amid the so-called higher classes, among the favored by education and fortune, we cannot wonder at the degree of abasement too frequently reached by the untrained, uncared-for, and poverty-stricken masses. What a vain, hollow, and even hypocritical sound must lessons of morality have to the weak and suffering when promulgated from the heights of luxurious ease and enjoyment! And yet, natural as this seems, it cannot be denied

that this sphere has its trials and temptations no less than the other.

What is real and tangible in life save this mental consciousness of our own being? Living according to the accepted standard of a million others, never for an hour diverging from established custom, submitting in joy as well as in sorrow to an imitation often absurd and sometimes contemptible, men generally are in danger of forgetting that there is such a thing as individual responsibility. To escape from mental imprisonment should be our chief thought and earnest longing. Nor is it with any selfish view of enjoyment that this wish should be harbored, but solely to obey a higher command than any hitherto listened to. We would be free, not to be idle and self-indulgent, but for the sake of devoting our ability, whatever be its degree, to some useful purpose; of giving the best of conscious life to the loftiest conception of that intellect called "our own."

Partial decay does not necessarily impair the lusciousness of the whole fruit. Thus, by removing a certain portion, where the worm or decay has destroyed, the rest may be eaten with impunity. So in character, defects even if grave do not necessa-

rily render it valueless or ugly. By veiling, extenuating, tolerating, or pitying,—removing morally the unsightly or injurious part,—the man may be esteemed and even loved. If perfection be found, let us appreciate, reverence, or love with all the warmth of which we are capable. But if there be only partial goodness, soundness, or beauty, let us also give of our respect and love. In proportion it must undoubtedly be, but the principle will enable us to find something in every one of our fellow-creatures to honor as well as to rebuke.

To have an object in life means much for every human being. For the thinking man it is the first step to be taken bearing directly upon his happiness. To have this is to possess something which will cause forgetfulness of the unavoidable petty annoyances of the present. This, after all, is the main need for men and women who have outgrown toys and whose energies yet call for occupation. How it quickens vitality and lends a new interest to even the meaner details of a career to rise in the morning and know there is one thing which no one else could perform with the same pleasure or skill, and which removes all inclination for lounging or indolence! To feel that the new day is to bring healthful exercise of the soul's highest

faculties; that, whatever the surroundings, the mind is not to become subordinate to the many time-killing expedients of the fashionable world or of self-complacent mediocrity; that, in defiance of the pressure of custom and the enervating influences so prevalent in society, there is to be a steady development of the mind's ruling idea: —this is, indeed, living for an object!

To the scholar meditation brings satisfaction greater than that found in youth, in travel, in admiration, or even in love. In all of those experiences are hinderances, imperfections, fears. Each passing year impresses the brevity of youth; each worldly advantage has its drawback. Travel brings discomfort and anxiety to mar the effect of novel sights and sounds. Society demands toil and much sacrifice of individuality before it yields its pleasures. Admiration never fails to awaken an inward doubt as to merit. While love,—that intoxicating essence, that idealized reality,—is not its fleeting nature an ever-tantalizing joy? But in meditation there is nothing to mar, trouble, or fear. Every moment brings not only its own special delight, but also the assurance of countless additional ones. With the intellect roused to action, the entire world acquires a new and more vivid glow of

interest. On the earth's surface, in the ocean's depths, in the thronged firmament, in the entire realm of the "Known" and the "Unknown," are myriads of wonders awaiting our minds.

To some people impulses are more real than houses, jewels, and raiment are to others. Hence when such people are urged by an inexplicable inner life to desert what they are engaged in and put interest and vitality into another field, the command cannot be disobeyed save at the cost of self-respect and content.

An impulse always means something, and if we fail to heed it we voluntarily reject one of the chief sources of happiness. It must be genuine, a part of the very self, coming as it does unlooked for, uncalled for, unwished. When we understand how it comes we shall likewise understand how we breathe, move, think, enjoy, and suffer, how and why we live.

How save through yielding to a strong inner impulse have men and women in any age elevated themselves above the mass? Can the conventionalist, the social slave, the sluggard, or the sensualist, ever hope to develop his higher nature, that which will give heart and intellect a chance for supremacy?

I know of nothing that gives such pure delight as helping a fellow-creature; and the greatest mistake one can make is in thinking this can be done only by means of money, food, or raiment. Invaluable as these are in certain cases, they are, after all, but a very small portion of our available resources. Sympathy, encouragement, hope, advice, knowledge, affection, time, strength, and experience may all appropriately come under the head of gifts. Well for us, well for the world, if this were borne in mind before pronouncing judgment upon generosity or meanness. We should learn to be more calm and lenient in judgment,—to look less to the mere outward manifestation, and to attach greater value to the entire character.

Some of the clearest minds and truest hearts have fallen into a condition of being in which all things seem to lose their identity and under delusive names lead to error and misery. Whatever of Reason be given, let it be guarded with unwearied care and strengthened by every possible means, so that when judgment becomes necessary in an important hour it may be rendered unhesitatingly. If Reason is to answer its end, it should be untrammelled by any sense of pleasure, passion, or gratified vanity. Clear and simple the question

should come to us, Is the step we are about to take right or wrong, wise or foolish? Clear and unmistakable in tone should come the reply, for or against the action.

THE WORD SOUL.

The human soul, mind, spirit, the ego! Why so many terms for the same thing? After all these centuries of thought in the same direction by so many hard students, is there not yet one word to express what everybody acknowledges to himself? You who read this, you who write this, we all well know the intense, vivid, incessant vitality that starts in yourself at the first moment of awaking to a new day. You can recall it as it was in earliest childhood,—in its chief qualities the same then as to-day in your maturity. You have never ceased wondering over its persistency in urging, driving, goading you towards certain fixed points. Mind, soul, spirit, the ego, the self, your self,—ah, what a very simple fact it is when you call it by that last name! The youngest child can understand that term, the profoundest philosopher can go no farther. He may write many volumes on the ego and its relations to other ideas of the same mysterious essence, yet never come any nearer to wisdom than the little

child who thinks, feels, enjoys, suffers, and is quite certain of his own identity as a special fact.

Of all explorations in this wonderful world of ours, nothing can compare in interest and in value to mankind with that of the soul. I select this word because among all the other words for the same thing it seems to express more of the whole fact,—the self. Mind to most people means merely the thinking machine, a something apart from heart, alias sensibilities, feelings: as, in common parlance, a man may have a good mind and a bad heart. All this is needlessly confusing. Put it to yourself. Your mind is clear—in certain directions. It can see and do, can receive and give out, in ways familiar to yourself and a few others. The next point to prove is in what respect your heart or soul or spirit is a distinct and separate faculty.

You are naturally either generous or close,—say with your money, your sympathies, your possessions of any kind. What makes you so? Is it not the impulse, either way, direct from your mind? Is it not there that impulses good and other are born,—impulses meaning justice, charity, generosity, as well as their antipodes? Is your mind's outlook a narrow, selfish one, your character is precisely that. But the world's acceptance of the word mind is distinct from heart, while soul is different from either.

SOME THOUGHTS ON RELIGION.

Prayer is nothing without holiness of life. In vain shall we cling to the altars of the temple, to human strength and sympathy, or even to works of charity, if our souls are not in perfect accord with the Most High.

Is not prayer an asking? And can men dare to ask for that which they make no effort of their own to acquire?

Is there sanctity in any of the offices of religion so long as a man knowingly partakes of that which injures body and soul?

Can the deepest of sighs or the most fervent of promises avail aught if there remain in the heart a consciousness of wilful laxity in one even of the fundamental principles of life?

Of what avail the clasped hands, the suppliant attitude, the streaming eye, the fervent words,—any

or all of the evidences of devotion,—if the life be not in harmony with self hood? Prayer is a mockery unless this harmony exists. Why ask for aid when within there is a fund of strength as yet untouched?

Prayer is the highest phase of communion with the Unseen. But this phase cannot be produced at will. It is simply an effect of moral and mental qualities in the individual.

Prayer—that unrestricted outpouring of the soul's best life to the ear of the Most High—is a means of which the time and mode of using must be left to the choosing of each separate soul. If a place for spiritual activity be found in the church, it is well; if in the home circle, in the sanctum, in public works, in private charity, in social life, in teaching, reforming, meditating, working, inventing, studying, it is also well.

For what are we struggling, toiling, praying, hoping? We should restrain our impatience, look calmly upon life as it is, do what in us lies, and forbear to murmur at the barriers which limit action. We should concentrate our being into the highest of which we can conceive, work conscientiously in our appointed sphere, and strive unceasingly to see

more and more clearly through the veil which this earthly habitation spreads before our eyes.

True life means the assimilation of action to conception. Not what we should like to be, but what we feel Nature means and gives us the power to be, should be our standard.

As living in its fullest sense is the best preparation for death, so the particular manifestations of this living can be justified only by revelation from within. Not what we would fain do, but what we feel specially urged to do by reason and conscience, must decide our course at all periods of our existence.

The use we make of existence is a voluntary act, strong or weak, good or bad, helpful or hurtful. To appeal to the Most High to make us better, to control our actions, to keep us from sin, is an evasion of a far more difficult act,—the controlling of self. Our religious convictions should centre in this one truth,—self-mastery. If we have not this we have nothing. Without this force we are as infidels, as heathens, as individuals to be feared, to be abhorred, to be ostracized; but with it we may claim a place on a footing with the highest and best of men.

Humanity, as a system of philosophy, offers us material for a lifetime of meditation and research; but systems, however admirable as feats of logic, are valuable only as aids and incentives to the study of humanity. How is it possible to have never so slight a conception of the meaning of the term Divinity save through the human intellect? Primitive people paint the Deity or make stone images of him,—and after whose likeness? Man's, and no other, and this because any other would be beyond human ability.

Religion, like love, should be held sacred, and should never be permitted to enter into general conversation. Who can say he understands these two great mysteries? Until he does, why should they be dragged in and confounded with material matters?

Not by what we believe, but by what we do, by what we are, should we be judged. Not the belief, but the life, should be the standard for self and for others, and whatever is doubtful should be submitted to this test.

Religion without honest conviction is mockery.

"SIMPLIFY THY LIFE."

(A VISION.)

It came upon me suddenly, as if in answer to certain thoughts which had been flitting through my brain. Startled, bewildered, dazzled, I stood as if transfixed, and during the few moments it lasted I was unconscious even of breathing. It had the form of a sage,—was tall, stately, slightly bowed, with noble head, and soft, flowing, silvery hair. Thought, experience, strife, suffering, had worn deep lines and furrows in the face, and at the first glance it struck me as the saddest I had ever seen. But at the second look this impression wore away. A peculiar, beautiful light diffused itself over the head and countenance, removing everything harsh or painful, putting strange and wonderful meanings into those deep lines and furrows. Power seemed given me to read them all. My heart bounded at the thought, but the time was too short for a close reading, and a hasty impression was all I could retain.

It was as if I stood face to face with another soul,

all earthly barriers removed, while the atmosphere was pure and heavenly. The eyes searched mine, held them fast, then the lips moved. Eagerly I leaned forward, fearing something, some word, might escape me, but there was no need. Each sound was clear, perfect, and came without hesitation or effort. Never had I heard such a voice,—one so distinct, so mellow, so tender,—one so full of soul! The exact words I cannot recall, but the sense remains ringing in my ears unceasingly. It ran thus:

"My child, simplify thy life! All thy weal here and beyond depends upon this! Thy soul is now going through an ordeal. I see the struggles and temptations, the weary efforts, efforts which will avail thee naught as long as thou clingest to earthly supports. Let go those weak, worthless threads which bind thee to custom, and cling to the golden chain which in rare moments thou art permitted to see, and which is firmly stapled in Paradise. I see the answer leaping from thy lips,—'I would, I would, but know not how nor where to begin!' How? Where? But I say to thee, my child, it matters not how or where. Only begin, and without delay, for thy time is short. Look to it that the moments and opportunities of each day escape thee not! And think not to do this thing without

much tribulation! Many and acutely painful will be the pangs, but only thus may the goal be won. If at times they seem too hard to bear and thou art tempted to succumb, remember the past, and, above all, remember the present. Hast thou always been, art thou now always, happy, serene, at peace with thyself and with the unseen? Hast thou not been, art thou not even now, crushed by a weight called 'essentials,' but which thy inner self truly regardeth as 'non-essentials'? Under this weight hast thou not had, hast thou not even now, much to endure? Hast thou not known the meaning of silent pain? In this new life to which I would lead thee there is also pain, sorrow, disappointment, yet less in degree than what thou hast already endured. Behold thy encouragement! Weep if thou wilt, as the old, familiar landmarks one by one disappear, but press on, on, on. At the end thy grief shall be turned to joy,—to joy unspeakable!"

With these words the sage moved, and stretched forth his hands towards me. I would fain have seized them, but could not. A consciousness of unworthiness came over me. Involuntarily I sank upon my knees, bowed my head low. And then the hands rested upon me with a gentle, firm pressure, while the voice continued:

"May Heaven help thee, my child, in the work

before thee! To me has it been assigned to point out, to guide, to urge, but, alas, only for a time! How long this influence may be permitted I cannot tell, nor would it be well for thee to have such knowledge. My experience is far beyond thine, my discipline widely different, yet our souls are related, and in their aspirations meet on common ground. Farewell,—and remember my words,—'Simplify thy life!'"

I lifted my eyes, but saw naught. The sage had vanished. I remained long on bended knees buried in deep, solemn thought with palpitating heart. Silence filled the room. The autumn twilight stole gently in the western window. I threw open the sash and took long draughts of the pure, fresh air, which seemed charged with unwonted strength-giving properties.

Yes, yes, thou art right. Thou hast given me strength; a new and better life is before me.

THE END.

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